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# THE NEW SOVIET EMPIRE





*By the same author*

THE REAL SOVIET RUSSIA  
THE RISE OF RUSSIA IN ASIA  
SOVIET RUSSIA AND THE FAR EAST  
FORCED LABOUR IN SOVIET RUSSIA  
(WITH BONS I. NIKOLAEVSKY)

# THE NEW SOVIET EMPIRE

By

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## Chapter I

# THE GROWTH OF THE SOVIET EMPIRE

**T**HE BIRTH of the Soviet Empire coincided with the partial disintegration or dissolution of other imperial structures—those of Germany, Japan, Italy, Britain, France, and the Netherlands.

Up to the late 1930's the Soviet state could hardly be termed an empire. Absorbed in its internal affairs, it had shown little evidence of a drive toward empire building or of an appetite for conquests, and in its theory and anti-imperialist ideology only the elements of future drives were present. Since 1939, however, and especially since 1944, the Soviet Union has been on the road to becoming the new Empire of the East. An empire is a large conglomeration of various nationalities forcibly held together by a great power. The imperial course implies aggrandizement by all diplomatic means, pressure, and armed force.

At an earlier stage the Soviet state had itself been instrumental in the destruction of empires and had conducted a more powerful drive against imperialism than any other government. Now, when events took a new turn and roads to empire opened up, Stalin's régime could not simply resume the imperial drive interrupted in 1917. It could not merely repeat the old songs and dream the old dreams. It could not use the old ways of Russian expansion.

The aim of traditional imperialism was frank: the aggrandizement of the state. The ultimate goal was the greatness of the imperial structure and its personification was the majestic figure of king, tsar, or emperor. It had been axiomatic that military victory leads to the acquisition of new areas, and that a great victory after a great war results in a large extension of



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the victor's realm; annexation of foreign lands was the obvious, undisputed right of the victor. Nothing of this kind was possible in a Russia that had made a creed of anti-imperialism; that had won adherents all over the world for its "struggle against 'imperialist exploitation'"; that had advocated liberation of colonies and freedom for all nations from oppression by the capitalist leviathans of the political oceans; that had tried to teach the world a moral lesson by the unique gesture of denouncing imperial Russian privileges abroad, particularly in Persia and China.

Yet now, after World War II, there is a revival of the drive to the east, south, and west which animated Russian conquerors throughout the years. This instinct of conquest, this irrational urge for expansion of all kinds, has re-emerged from the campaigns of the war; with it came political dynamism, a bellicose push-button philosophy, furore over military successes—and a wide vista of future drives, new territorial acquisitions, and new power.

The new expansionism differed from the old Russian concepts and methods in three respects. First, its scope was wider and its aims higher than those of the old Russian policy, which always dealt with limited objectives: an area in Turkey, a slice of Poland, a region in China. The present goal was the encompassment of the entire globe. Old Russia was thus easier to satisfy and peace with her easier to achieve than with her successor.

Second, traditional empire building was carried out by armies, the military power stationing its troops in conquered and annexed areas. The plan of the Soviet empire builders, on the other hand, was to operate through popular movements; what we call "the fifth column" has been, in theory, the Communist substitute for occupation by armed forces and felt with pride to be superior to the obsolete method of imperialism.

Third, unlike the old Russian Empire the Soviet government has so far refrained from incorporating territories of its satellites into Russia. It has maintained the fiction of their sovereignty and has denied any intention of making use of its satellites for purposes of economic exploitation.

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How much easier it was before! When, in 1815, a great war ended for Russia there were no scruples against territorial acquisitions. Tzar Alexander did not need the present-day excuses of "security" or "*anti-cordon sanitaire*" when he annexed the whole of Finland, the greater part of Poland, and Bessarabia. Similarly, Russia's programme in 1914-16 aimed at the creation, after victory, of a Russian sphere in Europe comparable to the present "Soviet orbit"; and yet the Russian government had no reason to conceal its intentions from its allies. The vision was of a reunited Poland attached to the Russian Empire, Czechoslovakia under a Russian prince, Serbia a Russian protectorate, Hungary and Rumania falling into the Russian sphere, and part of East Prussia added to Russia.<sup>1</sup> To take possession of most of these lands would have meant her appointment of Russian governors or viceroys where necessary and the stationing of Russian troops to prevent national uprisings against the new masters.

Today Stalin's orbit in Europe actually includes these territories. Stalin of course wants east Europe in the Soviet Union, yet he must pretend to be anti-annexationist and must act as if he wants his satellites to maintain real independence. In our present violently anti-imperialist world no other course has seemed possible, even to the cynics in the Kremlin.

The five years after 1945, on the surface highly successful ones for Moscow, have at the same time marked a grave crisis in Soviet empire building. The crisis was caused by the shortcomings of the three afore-mentioned methods of consolidating and enlarging the new empire. The peculiarities of the Soviet brand of imperialism proved to be a source of weakness.

Soviet troops, in accordance with Soviet principles, were first withdrawn after the war from Yugoslavia, which was to become the initial experimental area in Europe for the new sort of empire building. The Yugoslav leaders were to demonstrate the exemplary behaviour of a Communist party in power: they would, it was thought, recognize the authority

<sup>1</sup> This programme has been analyzed in some detail in my *Russia and Post-war Europe* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1943), pp. 168-174.



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of the Kremlin as superior; if Yugoslavia's particular interests clashed with those of the Soviet Union, the former would be subordinated to the latter; Yugoslavia would help economically to rebuild and strengthen the mother country of all Communist nations and would gladly make sacrifices to achieve this.

What actually happened is well known. No sooner had the Soviet troops left the country than the fatal conflict began its course. During 1946 it became grave; in 1947 the rift was so deep that a Cominform was created whose only purpose according to Yugoslav leaders was to arouse the fury of the International against Tito. In 1948 the Yugoslavs were excluded from the Soviet family; soon all Soviet economic and military missions had to leave the land of the infidel satellite. The Soviet Empire lost a great country, and its sphere of influence, which had stretched as far west as the Italian border, shrank considerably. The Soviet march on Europe was stopped, at least in the south.

If Russian troops had been stationed in Yugoslavia according to the old pattern, no rebellion would have been possible; had one broken out it would have been put down in the same way as were the uprisings in Poland in 1831 and 1863. But now, in 1948, it was too late; the Kremlin was reluctant to try to reconquer Belgrade by force of arms.

What happened in Yugoslavia served as a lesson: measures must be taken to secure the fidelity of the other satellites. These measures meant a reversion to the old ways of armed occupation. Poland, where anti-Soviet trends seemed to be particularly strong, was the first nation to feel the effects of the organic transformation of Soviet imperialism.

Before 1917 the greater part of Poland belonged to the old empire and was governed by a Russian governor general, a number of Russian provincial governors, and a Russian officialdom; a Russian army was stationed there. After the Tito rebellion in Yugoslavia the Soviet government put into effect a series of new measures in Poland which resembled the pre-revolutionary pattern.

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In November 1949 Soviet Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky was appointed to serve in Poland. Although he retained his Soviet citizenship and membership in the Communist party of the Soviet Union, Rokossovsky was made Poland's Minister of Defence and member of the State Council, the highest governing body in Poland, which had wide powers in making laws and making appropriations. He was also included in the Central Committee of Poland's Communist party ("United Workers party") and was immediately, although at first unofficially, included in the Polish Politburo. Among the eleven members of this body the Soviet marshal has obviously been wielding decisive influence.

Even before Rokossovsky's appointment almost all the leading posts in the Polish army had been entrusted to Soviet generals whose names were changed to sound Polish: the two vice-ministers were Generals Stanislaw Poplawski and Wladyslaw Korczyc; the leading personalities of the General Staff were Generals Siwicki and Kontrym; the head of the artillery was General Wojciech Bewziuk; of the land forces General Sienicki; of the air force Generals Romeyko and Kadazanowicz. Four of the five military districts of Poland are under Soviet commanders (Warsaw, Bydgoszcz, Wroclaw, and Krakow). In the Ministry of Defence as well as in the General Staff the great majority of the officers have come from Russia. Among the divisional and regimental commanders Poles are likewise in a minority. The total of leading Soviet personnel in the Polish army is variously estimated at from two to four thousand. In addition a few posts have been entrusted to loyal and obedient Polish Communists.

Simultaneously with the announcement of Rokossovsky's appointment all Polish Communist leaders suspected of opposing close ties with the Soviet Union were purged from the government and the army, the first among them being the potential Tito of Poland, the general secretary of the Communist party, Wladyslaw Gomulka.

The new set-up was very similar to the old imperial one, but for Soviet needs it still had significant shortcomings. Since Stalin wished to maintain the appearance of a sovereign



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Poland, the elevation of Marshal Rokossovsky had to be presented as an exception, a unique act of a purely personal nature: Poland's President Bierut "requested" the Soviet government "if possible" to place the marshal "at the disposal of Poland," and the Soviet government "in view of the friendly relations" between the two nations agreed to comply. The Kremlin did not proclaim its right to run the country or permanently to appoint Polish military leaders. Should Rokossovsky die or change his allegiance or be purged there were no legal means provided for a Russian emissary to succeed him as dictator of Poland.

To relinquish Poland to the Poles, however, is out of the question for Stalin's government. Poland is Russia's main road to the west, to Germany, and beyond; any Russian government which intends to operate in the west must control Poland. To be in a position to use this road Lenin fought a war with Poland in 1920; along with German generals he plotted against Poland in 1922. In 1939, when Hitler was about to upset the balance of Europe, Stalin's first thought was of Poland, and there he made his first invasion. In 1944-45, when Stalin decided to set up his own government in Poland, the first serious cleavage between him and his allies became inevitable. Today, too, Stalin's strength in Europe hinges on his dominance over Poland, and he would risk a war rather than restore Polish independence. As a matter of fact, Stalin-the-Emperor possesses more power over Poland than did any of his predecessors on the Russian throne, yet Stalin-the-Communist must disclaim any rights over Poland, thus making it difficult for the emperor to rule his empire.

Hungary and Rumania are two satellites whose fate will be in the balance if the Soviet army leaves Austria. True, hundreds of Russian plain-clothes policemen, army officers, and all kinds of "advisers" would remain indefinitely in both these "people's democracies"; their forces would be insufficient, however, against a popular rebellion. According to the Moscow agreement of 1943 Soviet troops may remain in Hungary and Rumania only so long as occupation forces remain in Austria.

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Consequently the four-power negotiations concerning Austria were broken off and attractive offers were rejected by the Soviet side. Moscow has withdrawn its army only from the smallest and least important satellites—Bulgaria and North Korea. The vast area subject to Russian military occupation has not essentially diminished since 1946. This inability to consolidate the empire after its aggrandizement is indicative of an organic defect in Soviet empire building as compared with the traditional forms.

The Soviet methods have proved unsatisfactory in regard to another problem of post-war Europe—Germany. Since 1943 Stalin has planned to separate eastern Germany and bring it under his control. In addition to a smaller area (Königsberg) which was to be incorporated into Russia, the East German state was to emerge as a component part of the new sphere of Soviet satellites.

In principle such a programme was not novel in Russian history. The partition of Poland is an illustration: between 1772 and 1815 the eastern areas of Poland were sliced off one after another, partly incorporated into the empire and partly constituted as a new Polish state which was to enjoy a certain autonomy under a Russian protectorate.

It was Stalin's intention to apply the same pattern to Germany. Partition of Germany was not impossible in the European power vacuum; moreover, it could find considerable support in France. For a time, perhaps until a new German national revival should bring the settlement into question, Stalin's new structure could subsist and develop.

So long as the war lasted Stalin fanned anti-German nationalist sentiment in Russia; contrary to the transparent aims of his public propaganda ("Hitlers come and go but Germany will remain"), he frankly demanded from his allies the old-fashioned "dismemberment" of Germany, meaning a part of former Germany for the Soviet Empire. Today we are repeatedly told that the Soviet government is a champion of "German unity." A statement repeated over and over begins to make an impression; repeated often enough, it becomes an



"indisputable fact." Actually the Soviet programme since 1943 has been one of dismemberment of Germany.

Molotov told Czechoslovak President Benes in 1943 that "Germany must be divided, but at present we must not reveal our intentions because we would only be assisting Hitler." Maxim Litvinov told Harry Hopkins in March of the same year that his government "would like to see Germany dismembered." At the Teheran Conference, when President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill proposed certain measures for keeping Germany weak in the future, "Stalin appeared to regard all measures proposed . . . for the subjugation and for the control of Germany as inadequate. . . . He appeared to have no faith in the possibility of the reform of the German people . . ."<sup>1</sup> At Yalta dismemberment was discussed at length by Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, as well as by their foreign ministers, Eden, Molotov and Stettinius. The details have now been made public by Stettinius in *Roosevelt and the Russians*: Roosevelt was somewhat hesitant, but was finally prepared to accept the formula of dismemberment. Churchill was more reluctant than Roosevelt, and Eden still more so. The driving force, however, was Stalin. He insisted not only on an immediate decision but also on inclusion of dismemberment in the terms of the surrender. Supported chiefly by Roosevelt, he succeeded in getting his views adopted. The formulas at Yalta included dismemberment of Germany as a "requisite for future peace and security." The published communiqué on the Yalta Conference did not mention dismemberment of Germany only "because it was felt that mention of it might increase enemy resistance."

Only three months after the Yalta Conference Stalin, now in possession of East Germany, said in a public statement which was contrary to his speeches in camera that "the Soviet Union does not intend to dismember Germany." Now the slogan of a Germany united under Moscow was to replace the modest goal of a separated pro-Soviet eastern province of Germany. To Stalin, as Communist commander-in-chief, acquisition of

<sup>1</sup> Robert Sherwood, *Roosevelt and Hopkins* (New York, Harper, 1948), pp. 713, 782.

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a zone in Germany did not mean an end of the expansionist drive; East Germany must serve as a bridgehead for a move into West Germany. A bit farther to the west the large party of French communism was waiting; beyond France the proud fifth column in Italy stood at attention. The limitations of traditional empire building did not fit Stalin's new stature. The outlook was too vast and exciting.

During the war dismemberment meant, to Moscow, the right to enter Germany; it was an argument favourable to Soviet expansion. After the war dismemberment had an overtone of finality, of a new stability, and it was this new meaning of the term that now moved Stalin to reject it. A tsarist Russia might have annexed German territory and moved Russia's frontier to the west, but this frontier would be final and stable, for a certain period at least; on such a basis some kind of settlement of the German question with Russia's allies would have been possible. For Stalin's Russia this was out of the question.

Once again Stalin-the-Communist barred the road to Stalin-the-Emperor.

### A TSAR OR PEACE?

Early in this century Marcel Sembat, a French Socialist, published a book, *Faites un roi ou sinon faites la paix*: a king or peace! France, then a world power and still strong, was entangled in a multitude of international conflicts: there were difficulties in Africa, conflicts over colonies, conflicts with Germany and with others. What Sembat was saying was that the political system of a free republic is not favourable to aggressiveness and belligerency in foreign affairs; if the policy of France must be aggressive and bellicose, a strong monarchy would be appropriate; if, on the other hand, political liberty is preferred, then peace with other nations must be made and maintained.

To an even greater degree this applies to Stalin's Russia today. In the long run and despite all benefits derived from Communist "fifth columns," tsarism was better adapted for large-scale great-power expansionism than is communism.



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The political set-up of imperial Russia had been the product of long experience, many successes and failures, victories and defeats; it was the set-up of a nation in the process of expansion, a state engaged in military operations, preparation for war, conquest, and the incorporation and subjugation of alien peoples. In the course of its history Russia had tried out all possible methods of empire building—employing severity and laxity, forcible Russification and tolerance of national tongues, autonomy and centralism, enlightened absolutism and brutal police systems. What emerged from the multitude of experiments was a political system suited to the needs of an empire which strove toward expansion but accepted stability, which waged numerous and aggressive wars but also practised living with and collaborating with other nations during long periods.

To Stalin our times are an extended period of world revolution during which there can be no real stability. To him global stability is a calamity, and “stabilization of capitalism” a negative process, since it means the strengthening of anti-Communist tendencies. Stalin’s communism thus blocks the road to the stability of his own empire. Stalin held North Korea but did not permit normal relations with Korea’s south; as soon as it became possible for him to do so he pushed beyond the 38th parallel. He is master in the continental Far East but he blocks the road to a peace with Japan. He holds East Germany but refuses to keep out of the German west. In an avalanche of wishful predictions his press and his social scientists observe everywhere and continuously “indisputable symptoms” of crises, catastrophes, rebellions, misery, and decay.

By stressing the superiority of old-style Russian policies over Stalin’s methods of empire building I do not mean to say that peace would be secured and Russia’s problems solved if in the drive for the aggrandizement of her realm her government resorted to the old means and methods. So long as this drive prevails no peace for the world and no relief for the people of Russia are possible, whatever political party is in power and whatever the methods by which it tries to operate.

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In her age-long drive to the west Russia reached her natural limits in the nineteenth century—if the term “natural limits” is permissible; in fact, she trespassed beyond these limits. In the course of her history she found it possible to annex and ingest various tribes and small nations living on her periphery when these nationalities belonged to the same or to a lower type of civilization. In the case of some nations, such as those on the shores of the Baltic, this absorption proved difficult, and in the case of Poland utterly impossible.

Now, having approached the heart of Europe, Russia's forces move among peoples of old and advanced civilization who cannot be easily absorbed and who have nothing to learn from their new teachers. The farther Russian forces advance today the more apprehension and resistance they encounter—an indisputable sign that Russia has transgressed some unmarked boundary set by nature and history as a limit for her expansion in Europe.

Stalin's government, however, does not interpret the signs in this way. Stalin is convinced that historical laws which were valid for Russia under his predecessors do not apply to a Soviet Union. He therefore continues his drive toward a greater empire. The more he succeeds the stronger resistance grows; the greater his power the more blocks he meets on his road.

The same ambiguity is inherent in the foreign economic activities of the Soviet government. In this field conflict develops between the course of Soviet action on the one hand and basic Communist philosophy and propaganda on the other.

Theories and concepts of imperialism, produced for political purposes, were born at the end of the 1815-1914 era of world empires. One of these theories, the handiwork of Lenin, is presented in a book he wrote early in the First World War entitled *Imperialism as the Highest Stage of Capitalism*. The work gained prominence and became a part of the iron-clad Communist ideology; it is still studied in all Soviet universities and academies. Non-Communist Russians and all Communists



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abroad are obliged to know its contents. Essentially, all the anti-imperialist tirades of the Soviet and satellite delegates in the United Nations and all their fulminations against the "warmongers" of the West are based on this theory of imperialism; the phalanx of Soviet social scientists has not been able to add new ideas to this legacy bequeathed by Lenin. Consequently concepts and theories advanced today to justify Soviet foreign policy are based on the facts of another time, on a world situation that has ceased to exist.

In 1910-14, when Lenin's ideas on imperialism were ripening, a significant feature of the global picture was the partition of all available areas among the colonial powers:

The characteristic feature of this period is the final partition of the globe—not in the sense that a *new* partition is impossible—on the contrary, new partitions are possible and inevitable—but in the sense that the colonial policy of the capitalist countries has completed the seizure of the unoccupied territories on our planet. For the first time the world is completely divided up, so that in the future *only* redivision is possible; territories can only pass from one "owner" to another, instead of passing as unowned territory to an "owner." Hence we are passing through a peculiar period of world colonial policy, which is closely associated with the "latest stage in the development of capitalism," with finance capital.<sup>1</sup>

The partition of the world had reached its limits, Lenin thought; after eighty years of "grabbing and partitioning" nothing was left to partition. What next? Would the capitalist nations be able to exist without expanding their empires? Lenin believed they could not get along without great colonies; that capitalism would begin to "decay" if it did not have far-flung possessions. In Lenin's view colonies, semi-colonies, and dependencies had formerly been wanted mainly for purposes of trade; now they were sought chiefly as a field for capital investments of the mother country. Capitalism, which must suffocate without colonies and dependencies, was becoming more and more aggressive and bellicose because use of force

<sup>1</sup> V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works* (International Publishers, 1942), XIX, 148, 149.

is the only way to acquire them. Hence his expectation of a series of wars and of the global social revolution in a foreseeable future.

The theory was clear, simple, and well rounded, and made a strong appeal to popular emotions. It therefore played a tremendous rôle after the First World War, with Lenin's growing International accepting it as its bible. Even at that time, thirty years ago, the theory was faulty, and a critical mind could easily discover the fallibility of its tenets. Most strong popular movements of history have been guided by such erroneous, primitive, but exciting ideas and emotions.

Events of the last decade, however, prove the falsity of this concept of imperialism. A world that was "divided up" and in which colonies and dependencies could be acquired only in wars, "imperialist wars," has witnessed a rebirth of nations recently dependent on great powers; the world of "possessions" has shrunk and is shrinking farther. Britain has lost India, Burma, Ceylon, Palestine; the Netherlands have lost Indonesia; France has lost Syria and Lebanon; Japan has lost Korea, Formosa, and Manchuria; Italy is losing at least Libya and Abyssinia; the United States has relinquished her rights to the Philippines. The British dominions, formerly colonies, have attained such a degree of independence that they cannot longer be counted as "possessions" of the crown or as exploited nations.

The powers have lost 11.5 million square miles of possessions and 561 millions of population. Asia, formerly a theatre of great-power rivalry and colonial wars, has become practically independent of its foreign masters; of its 1.2 billion<sup>1</sup> inhabitants only 55 million still live in colonies and dependencies of the Western powers. Africa remains the last domain of imperialism; but its population is less than 5 per cent of the world's total.

Only a fraction of the former empires are today in the domain of the old-style imperialism.

The picture is precisely the opposite of Lenin's "blind alley." As far as investment of capital abroad is concerned,

<sup>1</sup> Billion = a thousand million.



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events have again proved that such economic activity does not necessarily mean political enslavement: in India and Indonesia, for instance, British and Dutch investments have continued while British and Dutch colonial administrations have had to quit. If today the Leninist world were free to think, criticize, and revise, this pillar of its philosophy would be recognized as obsolete.

### "YOU ARE SOVIET COLONIZERS"

During this post-war period the Ministry of Foreign Trade in Moscow has become a ministry of economic empire building; it no longer limits itself to pure commerce. It has expanded enormously since the war and at present handles all kinds of economic activity abroad, while the usual import and export deals are no longer of primary significance. In the course of briefing a group of his officials preparing to go abroad Anastas Mikoyan, until recently the official head of the ministry, always frank and occasionally cynical behind closed doors, told them: "You are Soviet colonizers. Economics determine policies—you must be Soviet businessmen, 'Soviet capitalists.' We will help you."

Like most of his colleagues in the government, Mikoyan learned his job by practice, a costly and dangerous method of training. Mistakes and failures alternated with successes; after a time, however, he rose to the rank of Communist Merchant Number One. Since the mid-thirties he has been a member of the Politburo, and in this capacity has also supervised a group of related ministries. Along with Molotov, he was relieved of his post in February, 1949, after twenty-four years as the head of the same department—a record in the history of ministers in Russia or elsewhere. But Mikoyan still sits in the Politburo, and this means a great deal.

From the days in 1944 when Soviet troops began to cross the borders into other lands, new and difficult tasks confronted Mikoyan's agency. Trade had to be reorganized. It was a peculiar kind of trade, since Russia had little to export and was in need of practically everything. Lend-lease supplies from the United States continued, but these were insufficient

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for the great needs of a devastated country. It was the task of Mikoyan's MVT (*Ministerstvo Vneshnei Torgovli*) to acquire whatever was available abroad, by any means, fair or foul.

For the young and naïve who ask questions and whose consciences need to be soothed, the "liberating" function of the Soviet Union was brought to the fore: a great liberator is entitled to special treatment and privileges. Soon the "single-handed" victory over Germany and the Soviet's "decisive" rôle in the Far East were being applauded. Consequently anything was permissible if it served to restore the life of a country that had bled itself white to liberate the globe.

It happened that Soviet troops in Rumania had captured Dr. Carl August Clodius, economic empire builder of the Nazi régime. An outstanding expert in all European economic matters, Clodius had worked hard to make Berlin the financial capital of the "new world" as it expanded between 1937 and 1943. He concluded trade agreements for the Third Reich, always looking for special benefits and advantages for the Fatherland. It was his subordinate, Dr. Schnurre, who conducted all the preliminary negotiations for the Stalin-Hitler pact of 1939, and it was his department that organized the extensive trade with Russia in 1940-41 and secured for Germany large deliveries of grains, oil, and metals.

When Soviet troops brought Clodius as a prisoner to Moscow, Mikoyan already knew a good deal about his German opposite number. It was a happy coincidence that Clodius appeared at the moment when a new type of "foreign trade," hitherto unknown to Mikoyan, had to be started. A few years before, when Germany had been great and strong but unwilling or unable to pay, Clodius had been able to obtain oil, fats, grain, and fodder from eastern Europe. Now it was the Soviet Union, also great and strong and likewise unable to pay, that needed these commodities. Clodius applied his talents . . .

It was a principle of Moscow that wealth and capital belonging to Germany or to Germans in Soviet-occupied territories should automatically fall to the Soviet Union; this applied also to Japanese property in Manchuria and Korea.



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In his book on the Yalta Conference Edward Stettinius mentions Stalin's desire to diminish Germany's industrial productivity by 80 per cent. This meant wholesale dismantling of German industry; in fact, dismantling industrial units and shipping equipment to the east was the main Soviet method of obtaining "reparations"—at least in the early stages. This method, first publicly proposed by Soviet economist Eugene Varga, seemed far superior to the traditional methods of obtaining reparations.

The result was a great disappointment: the gains of Russia's economy from shipments of industrial equipment were small; the losses of the dismantled country were enormous. Why kill the hen that was laying golden eggs? Was it not more sensible to stop destruction and organize production abroad to meet the needs of the Soviet Union? Hundreds of shops and plants marked for dismantling could be allowed to continue in operation, only now the proprietor would be a foreign power. Even that could be camouflaged so as not to irritate the nationalistic feelings of the local population. The "mixed company"—an industrial corporation 50 per cent Soviet and 50 per cent the government of the satellite in question (sometimes 51 and 49 per cent)—became the universal form of Soviet economic activities abroad. The mixed company, excellent window dressing, had been tried out in the case of the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria between 1924 and 1935; it had been proposed as an equitable agreement between the Soviet authorities and the Chinese. Both parties had the same rights, with one slight difference: the general manager of the railroad was to be a Soviet citizen. This slight deviation from equality, however, had been sufficient to deprive the Chinese of all influence.

Moscow decided that the Manchurian pattern could be applied universally. Mixed companies mushroomed all over eastern Europe, including East Germany. Hungary "shared" her bauxite, oil, iron and steel, chemicals, electricity, railroads, aviation with the Soviet Union. These are the industries which, in Soviet parlance, constitute the "commanding heights" and which, according to Marxist concepts, secure political control

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over a country. In Rumania seven *sovroms* (Soviet-Rumanian companies) embrace air, maritime, river, and highway transport; banking; lumber; and the oil industry. Here, as in Hungary, the Russian 50 per cent often consists of American, British, and French property sequestered by Germany during the war and now, as "Nazi property," taken over by a *sovrom*. More than half the Austrian oil output is in Soviet hands and according to the parts of the prospective treaty already agreed on, will remain so; what is more important, the Soviet state will be entitled to prospect for oil on a great part of Austria's territory. In Poland new steel, chemical, and cement factories are being built according to plans prepared in Moscow. In Slovakia new oil fields were discovered in 1950 in an area extending from Malacky to the border of Austria; Soviet representatives promptly announced that the new fields are "actually" branches of the Soviet-controlled Austrian oil fields and that therefore the Soviet Union would exploit them. Czech uranium mines were taken over by Soviet agencies as early as 1945.

Similar developments have been going on in the Far East, only here the facts are better concealed. It was officially announced that in the province of Sinkiang two mixed Soviet-Chinese companies had been created to operate the oil and non-ferrous metal industries. Though exact data are lacking, there is no doubt that the industry of North Korea was operated on a similar basis and that the principle of mixed companies will also be applied in Manchuria.

What Mikoyan acquired in Germany, however, was far more extensive and far more important than all the Soviet enterprises in the satellite countries. Early in 1946 it was decided to take over two hundred of the largest industrial units, among them the world-famous Zeiss factory (optical instruments); the Meissen factory (porcelain); synthetic fuel, paper, machine-building units; and even publishing houses. The units were organized into thirty groups—chemicals, instruments, fuel, and others. Each group was constituted an industrial corporation (SAG—*Sowjet Aktien-Gesellschaft*), with the Soviet government holding 51 per cent of the shares and



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the Germans (the Communist-controlled agencies of East Germany) 49 per cent. Later Moscow decided to return seventy-four units which were found to be burdensome and not lucrative enough to the German agencies controlling the nationalized industry, but not before they were stripped of their most valuable equipment.

The remaining 126 German factories are administered by the Soviet MVT. A new department of this ministry has been created: the Chief Administration of Soviet Property Abroad, which controls all the mixed companies. The department's agency for Germany is located in Weissensee, near Berlin.

The Soviet-controlled portion of East German industry embraces 34 per cent of the coal output, 40 per cent of the electric power, 82 per cent of the oil, 34 per cent of the metallurgy and machine building, 52 per cent of chemical production, 25 per cent of the optical industry, and so on. Three hundred thousand German workers are employed in the SAG industries, in addition to about 400,000 workers employed in the uranium-producing Wismuth-A.G. The total production of the thirty SAG industrial groups is estimated (by the Deutsches Institut für Wirtschaftsforschung, Berlin) at 3,200,000,000 marks a year (about \$800,000,000).

This system of economic exploitation represents a vast tribute paid to the Soviet Union by its satellites. No figures have been published by either side and the statistics are a well-guarded state secret, but every week ships and railway trucks carry to the Soviet land the huge "surplus value" produced by satellite peoples of the West and of the East, which must certainly amount to billions of dollars a year. (See pp. 24 f.)

In addition, the Soviet government, by means of a number of secret agreements, has acquired privileges for the mixed companies which make them in effect tax and custom exempt, and which often include the right to maintain their own factory guards. This type of Soviet-controlled police may become significant as a nucleus of Soviet power, especially in countries at present occupied by the Soviet army.

The Soviet Union has thus over-night become the owner of

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great capital abroad—a novel situation in Russian history.

For a century before and to some degree after the revolution Russia was a field for foreign investment. It was not so long ago that Lenin invited foreign capitalists to Russia and was prepared to acquiesce in the exploitation of the Russian worker by the foreign industrialist and to pay dividends to the latter in the hope of increasing Russia's productive capacity. Stalin was in complete agreement with this policy of Lenin's. Neither dreamed then of Russia's making investments in other countries. In fact, in 1917-18 Lenin's government renounced all Russian privileges and investments abroad. These investments, it is true, were rather sparse and were confined to the Near and Far East: Russian banks in Iran and China, oil concessions, and indemnities were solemnly "returned" to the respective nations or cancelled. Lenin and his party did not attempt to nationalize these properties in favour of the Soviet state and to operate them as external assets in favour of the "first Socialist country." Later the Chinese Eastern Railway became the first instance of a deviation from this rule, and for a long time remained the only important exception.

The turnabout has a significance of which leading people in Moscow realized the scope. How clearly they understand the change is obvious from the fact that silence and secrecy have surrounded Russia's new rôle as a capital investor. The Soviet press never mentions it; the MVT does not have a word to say about it in *Foreign Trade*, its periodical, whose editors and writers without exception have been required to study Lenin's theory of imperialism; they would not have passed their examinations had they failed to memorize the principle that possession of productive forces abroad means exploitation of foreign labour and is the "most important symptom of modern imperialism."

Along with its acquisition of foreign material investments, the Soviet Union had to speed up the creation of a new class of colonial administrators. These were selected and given rapid preparation under the auspices of the party's Central Committee. The number of these administrators is a secret



but it is vast—far greater than the British colonial service, for instance, possessed in its heyday. Little Albania alone has had to invite and keep more than 3,000 Russian advisers and officials. In May 1950 independent sources in Hongkong estimated the number of Soviet advisers in China at 23,000.<sup>1</sup> In Shanghai alone 2,000 advisers and their families were concentrated in the fashionable residential area of Hungjao.<sup>2</sup> Throughout eastern Europe, Germany, and the Far East more than 100,000 advisers are necessary to organize general staffs and check on the newly created armies, police force, and mushrooming secret police; to create planning commissions in the Soviet orbit; teach collectivization of agriculture; give directions for nationalized foreign trade; operate the multitude of mixed companies for the Soviet government; cope with the tasks of occupation where occupation is still in force; and carry out a number of other duties.

Measured in terms of the social standards of their own country or of the country in which they are stationed, Russian advisers are a kind of aristocracy. Living abroad is in itself a considerable privilege. Although closely observed by agents of the ubiquitous secret MGB and often prohibited from mingling with the local population, they greatly enjoy their rôle of "Soviet colonizers" and their life in a country which to them is the "West." Their salaries are higher than those of their colleagues from among the "natives," often higher than that of a minister. The Yugoslavs have disclosed, for example, the salaries paid to Russian managers and engineers; the Soviet manager in charge of a bridge construction job near Belgrade received 50,000 dinars a month; a Russian chief engineer 45,000 dinars, and his deputy 26,000; a director of supplies received 25,000, a chief mechanic 22,000, a department chief 22,000. (A Yugoslav minister's salary was 12,000 dinars a month.) In addition, the Russian officials were supplied gratis with furnished villas or flats with radio, telephone, heat, and light, cars, servants, and a bonus of a month's salary for each year's work. In 1948 Soviet advisers of the rank of colonel or

<sup>1</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, May 7, 1950.

<sup>2</sup> Chinese News Service, September 8, 1950.

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general were receiving 31,000 to 40,000 dinars a month from the Yugoslav government, while a general in the Yugoslav army received 9,000 to 11,000.

In only a few instances are salaries paid out of the Soviet treasury; usually the "inviting" country, or the mixed company to which they are assigned, foots the bill. The high salaries therefore are no burden to Russia. Despite the secrecy that is maintained, the local population is aware of this state of affairs.

The industrial corporations have been the most striking form of Soviet economic expansion since the war, but other methods have also been applied.

First there were the concept and practice of collecting "war booty," extended to embrace factories and ships in addition to food, cattle, rolling stock, and raw materials. War booty was taken not only in the countries of the enemy but also in Poland and Yugoslavia; all "German property" had to fall to Russia, not to its small allies. Removal of war booty, organized by the MVT in collaboration with the army, necessitated long lines of freight trains from all the occupied countries in Europe, and, in the autumn of 1945, from Korea and Manchuria. No figures, not even estimates, of the total value of the booty have been published. The Manchurian total was estimated by an American commission at over \$800,000,000.

Second, the armies of occupation—the occupation being now in its sixth year—are billeted and fed at the cost of the occupied country.

Third, the reparations being collected from four nations (exclusive of Germany) are to aggregate \$685,000,000, after reductions granted by the Soviet government in 1948; this amount is payable in goods, in instalments. Total reparation deliveries from Germany are set at \$6,829,000,000. Most of the reparations treaties provide for calculating reparations on the basis of 1938 prices; prices in the meantime have almost doubled, which means that goods delivered on account of reparations debts are not credited at their actual price but at prices that prevailed before the war. Almost twice as many dollars are necessary today to buy the same amount of goods.



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In the case of Rumania, for instance, it was estimated that up to September 1946 that country, which is obliged to pay \$300,000,000 in reparations, had already paid \$174,000,000 for "restitutions," \$430,000,000 for "confiscations," \$300,000,000 for maintenance of Soviet troops, and \$105,000,000 in instalments on the reparations bill. General Nicholas Radescu, former Rumanian premier, has stated that up to July 1948 Rumania paid out \$1,785,000,000 in reparations.

The value of Soviet "political imports"—a new term meaning acquisitions obtained without payment or with only token payment—has been estimated by conservative economists in this country at over \$1,200,000,000 for 1947.<sup>1</sup> German economists, however, exaggerating perhaps, arrive at considerably higher figures. Senator Harmssen of Bremen estimated in 1948 that Germany's payments to the Soviet Union in the three years after the war amounted to \$10,000,000,000, or over \$3,000,000,000 a year. The Social Democratic party, in a detailed memorandum published in 1950, indicated an even higher amount. It estimated "war booty" at \$2,000,000,000, dismantling of German industries at \$4,000,000,000, and other payments and deliveries at over \$10,000,000,000.

Fourth, new trade deals and agreements between Russia and her satellites were usually based on the American dollar as the stable currency. The process of translating the inflated currencies into dollars provided wide opportunities for sleight of hand. In Hungary, for instance, the dollar was valued sometimes at 11.60 filler and sometimes at 25.00, depending on which amount happened to be more advantageous.

Fifth, the MVT sometimes bought products from the satellites at a low price and resold them to another country at a large profit; this was the basis on which Moscow sold German fertilizers to Finland and Polish coal to Sweden. Rumanian oil was delivered to the other satellites through a deal with the MVT in Moscow. The most striking instance of such trade practices was the sale to Czechoslovakia of Bulgarian zinc concentrate: Bulgaria tried to negotiate the sale herself,

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Gerschenkron, "Russia's Trade in the Post-war Years," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* (May, 1949).

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quoting a price of \$144 a ton; Moscow stepped in and under-sold Bulgaria in zinc concentrates bought from Bulgaria at a low price. These deals yielded a large profit to the middleman. In October 1948 Bulgaria bought from Rumania two shiploads of wood intended for resale to Turkey. A Soviet patrol vessel halted the Bulgarian ship on the Black Sea and ordered it back to a Bulgarian port. Soviet representatives demanded that the wood be sold to them and later resold it at a higher price on the world market.<sup>1</sup>

Sixth, new trade agreements were concluded. A few details are available to illuminate their essential substance. Prices agreed to were often favourable to the Soviet side and unfavourable to the satellites. Poland, for example, was selling coal to Russia and buying cotton from her; in these deals the price of coal was lower and the price of cotton higher than on the world markets. In 1948, when the world price of coal was between \$14 and \$20 a ton, Poland sold 600,000 tons of coal to the Soviet Union for \$1.20 a ton, thus making the Soviet net gain in this one transaction about \$10,000,000. Bulgarian rose oil was resold by Moscow at 1,000 per cent profit. Rumanian aviation oil was delivered to Russia at a price of 7 cents a gallon; for mediocre Soviet Zis trucks Rumania paid \$2,900 each. From Manchuria and China scores of trainloads of soybeans, pig bristles, tin, and tungsten were constantly going to Russia whereas only a few Soviet automobiles and modest cargoes of wine and chocolate appeared in Peking and Tientsin.

Seventh, interest on Soviet loans was often higher than the going rate between governments. For the loan to Czechoslovakia, for instance, 3½ per cent was charged, whereas the Export-Import Bank rate was 2½ per cent.

The eighth type of economic pressure, the newest chapter in this history, was manifest in the Soviet request for payment for the Comintern's "help" during three decades. Moscow has demanded \$10,000,000 from Bulgaria for financial assistance to the Bulgarian Communist party and for assistance to its leaders during their stay in Russia; having achieved its goal,

<sup>1</sup> *New York Herald Tribune*, December 16, 1949.



state power, the Bulgarian Communist party must pay its debt. No documents have been published to disclose how the sum of \$10,000,000 has been arrived at for Bulgaria. If the other European satellites, including Germany, pay on the same basis, their Comintern debts to Russia may make a sizable total. In addition, the new Far Eastern satellites will be presented with similar bills. Vistas are opening . . .

Russia's economic recovery since the end of the war has been considerable. When the Soviet government claims that Russia has reached approximately its pre-war level it is making no empty boast. Living conditions have also improved since 1945. That this could happen while three million men are kept in the army and a large part of Russian industry is still busy with military production has been due to the eight methods of obtaining foreign assistance, in addition to UNRRA which operated during the early post-war period. The total value of "political" imports into Russia has probably reached between 20 and 30 billion dollars; a certain part of these consisted of consumer goods, of which the city of Moscow received the largest share. This is why Moscow, the dressed window of the great store, sometimes gives the impression of an almost attained Soviet normalcy. For the very poor land of Russia 20 to 30 billion dollars of "free" imports within a period of a few years meant a great deal.

Some of the ingenious methods of post-war foreign trade—namely, pure war booty and grabbing by force—will have to be relinquished soon. Reparations payments will end, too. What will remain are, first, Soviet vested interests in its orbit—a capital sum the value of which cannot even be estimated; second, Moscow's rôle as a commercial centre—as a broker between its satellites; third, the political pressure upon its satellites in order to obtain high prices for its products and to lower the prices of its purchases.

If imperialism is really what Lenin defined it to be—if its main traits are interests abroad, capital investments, profits on a large scale, and political control of foreign nations to secure their economic exploitation—then the newest pattern

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of Soviet relationship with the nations of its orbit clearly falls within this definition. The process of "partition of the world" among the other powers has been reversed in the forty years since his theory emerged. While Western imperialism has relinquished more than three quarters of its territory, the Soviet state has grown vastly to become the mainstay of expanding imperialism—in Lenin's sense.

The basic difference between Western and Eastern imperialism has been the methods employed in economic empire building. In the West they consisted in a steadily growing export of goods and in investments; capital abroad was accumulated in the course of years and decades. The Soviet government, on the other hand, has not been busy with foreign investment of its capital; what it acquired from abroad was inherited in one historic moment as a part of victory in a war. What economic activity accomplished for the West was achieved by Moscow through sheer military force and political power.



## Chapter II

# POWER AND PRESTIGE

**M**ORE THAN once, and contrary to its own official theory, Moscow has demonstrated that under certain conditions and for limited periods power becomes the primary factor in history, while economic phenomena are products of and deviations from it. The well-known Marxist formula has been reversed: power serves as the "foundation" and economy as the "superstructure."

Power lies at the basis of the Soviet state; naked power was used to carry out the social transformations; power served to "socialize" half of Europe and Asia. Power is the midwife, Marx once said, at the birth of a new society. Moscow has proved that in the East the impact of power reaches far beyond this initial phase in the life of a society, that it in itself is a factor of tremendous significance, and that the entire history of our days and years moves under its impact.

In this respect a curious reversal of rôles has occurred in our days. The non-Soviet world which rejects Marx's theories and refuses to explain historic developments merely by economic and social "driving forces" has become exceedingly Marxian in regard to Communist successes and threats of communism. To explain Soviet victories and the Communist danger we dig into sociology and instance the low standard of living in many countries, land hunger in China, famine in India, poverty in eastern Europe. General Marshall, quite properly never suspected of Marxist views, elaborated a great plan to improve social conditions in Europe in order to prevent Communist victories.

While the American general was experimenting with this theory that economic conditions determine political views the

recognized head of world communism was making the opposite experiment: to him Power was the demiurge, a value in itself and not necessarily tied up with social or economic or any other conditions.

More than once Stalin has emphasized his brand of "creative" versus "dogmatic" Marxism; and in fact, his faith in theories and teachings has always been conditioned by his strong empiricism. He stressed his particular attitude toward any doctrine in 1917 when the question was hotly discussed whether or not a backward Russia would be able to make the leap into socialism. Deviating from traditional old Leninism<sup>1</sup> Stalin was certain that the transformation would be possible if sufficient force was available. He reiterated his credo recently, during the "debate on linguistics" in 1950; he lashed out against those "who see the letter of Marxism but do not see its essence . . ." "Marxism does not recognize," he said, "unalterable inferences and formulas, in force for all epochs and periods."

Nothing is so convincing as trying, making the practical experiment. Stalin's own rise was a matter of fights in which force proved decisive. A hundred million peasants were collectivized by force or threat of force. To Stalin, Soviet Russia's position among the nations has always been the reflection of her power. Her great expansion in the East and West since 1945 was won by the sword.

While we have been philosophizing about the abject poverty in the Balkans or in China as the source of Stalin's successes, Stalin himself has not cared about the social conditions in his satellites. For a long time, under the new régimes, chaos prevailed in industry, trade was disrupted; famine in south-eastern Europe was grave in 1946-47 and conditions in China in 1950 were even worse. Real wages could not and cannot rise in the satellite countries, since industry has been militarized in preparation against the "warmongers." Nevertheless Stalin was confident that no danger would arise for his satellite régimes so long as his power machinery dominated the "people's democracies." Nor was he ever in doubt as to whether, contrary to Marx's precepts, the most backward

<sup>1</sup> This important controversy is dealt with in greater detail in Chapter VII.



peoples of his backward realm, such as the North Koreans and the inhabitants of Sinkiang, are "ripe for socialism": police and army suffice to resolve this sociological problem; to him political power is the creator of social systems, not the other way around.

No political leader in history has been more contemptuous than Stalin toward weakness or purely ideological influence ("How many divisions has the Pope of Rome?") and more respectful toward strength in his opponents, as for instance toward the Führer in 1936-40. People call it cynicism; yet so far Stalin has proved right in his view of the impact of political power.

The psychological aspect of power is more important than its military-technical-police aspects. As a psychological phenomenon political power is able to generate additional power; by its own workings and up to a certain limit it grows and extends its influence—a kind of *perpetuum mobile*. Whatever its nature, philosophy or goals, a government which has succeeded in climbing high can continue for some time to climb higher by the very increment of its strength.

The "fifth columns" is one case in point. From 1931 to 1945 Japan had collaborators among the Chinese, Burmese, and Indonesians; and a similar situation existed in the German satellites in Europe. In neither Europe nor Asia was financial reward the only attraction; thousands who had no financial interest in Japanese conquests came over to the side of the victorious power. They observed the victory; they saw the resistance crushed; they saw the tanks, the squadrons of aircraft, the discipline of the army machine. For their benefit military parades were held to display and exaggerate the force of the conqueror. The conclusions were logical: Why butt your head against a wall? Apparently "their" power is irresistible, and our generation must put up with it; personal happiness and the people's happiness demand collaboration with the victor. Consequently a peaceful adjustment within the framework of a Greater East Asia or a German-dominated Europe is sensible.

Stalin's fifth columns in the Russian satellite countries emerged strong and all-conquering as a result of the same mental process. The Communist core in Rumania and Hungary was negligible on the eve of the defeat of these countries in the war; it was almost zero in eastern Germany. In 1948, however, the Rumanian and Hungarian parties had 650,000 and 500,000 members respectively. Even in little Bulgaria the Communist party membership rose from a few hundred to 500,000. Three years after the withdrawal of the Japanese North Korea had a Communist party 740,000 strong and China (the northern half at that time) a party membership of 3,000,000. Perhaps the most striking of all was the party in East Germany, which reached a strength of 1,800,000 out of a population of 17,000,000. This 15 per cent of the adult population is a ratio never attained elsewhere; in Russia the highest has been 5 per cent. We may be sure that of these 1,800,000 men and women at least 90 per cent voted for Hitler, marched in his *Strassenzüge*, and helped in his various campaigns. However, they are today by no means camouflaged Nazis. Both in 1933 and in 1945 they simply took the side of the strong; this was a part of what they consider their ideological evolution.

It is hard for a citizen of a free great nation to understand the guiding political emotions in second- and third-rate powers stranded between the Two Worlds. An American says: "*we will fight*" or "*we will not fight*"; "*we accept the challenge*" or "*we lean over backward.*" An Austrian or a Chinese or an Italian says: *they will or will not fight, they will or will not appease their adversaries.* To the citizen of a small power world events appear as independent of his and his people's will; they develop like an earthquake, and he is caught up between men and powers having their own strength and initiative; he must *choose* and *adhere* rather than lead. Left alone, with no protectors, he and his nation automatically fall prey to a strong aggressive neighbour when the latter starts to patrol his frontier, fly about in his skies, demand surrender. Then he is doomed and there is no escape.

This peculiar mentality of a second-rate power has made



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"bloodless victories" easy during the last decades. We saw Germany conquer Czechoslovakia "without a shot" in 1938-39; Japan occupied Manchuria in 1931; Hitler took over Denmark in 1940; Stalin occupied the Baltic states in the same year. In Rumania, one set of leaders ruled in the thirties, when France was the great protector; in 1940 German pressure from outside resulted in an internal upheaval and the Antonescu clique took over; in 1944-45 a Communist administration was set up. A kind of aping, an involuntary adoption of another's appearance and gestures, seems to rule not only in segments of the world's fauna but in the relationships between human communities, too.

China's history during the last two decades is another case in point. So long as Japan was the strongest of the Far Eastern powers, her pressure was effective and successful and she easily found sets of pro-Japanese leaders in the big cities of eastern China. When the Soviet power succeeded Japan as the master of east Asia, a new set of leaders, hitherto hidden in a corner of a northern province, emerged as the only real force. Superficially viewed, Soviet arms were not decisive. Yet today China is a Communist-ruled nation in accordance with this law of political magnetism and she will remain so until another power relieves the Soviet pressure on her periphery and borders.

As far as internal power developments are concerned, Germany in 1932-33 furnished a striking example of how a strong force can reproduce itself on a growing scale. In November 1932 the popular vote for the Nazi party was 11,700,000. Only four months later it reached 17,300,000. The second election was not fraudulent, certainly not to the extent of accounting for a shift of almost six million votes; nor was fear a motive. What actually happened between November 6, 1932, and March 5, 1933, and what had turned the sympathies of the voters toward the new régime was the appointment of Hitler as chancellor on January 30, 1933. As soon as the new régime installed itself in the ministries and pledged its strength in every aspect of government, large numbers of its opponents

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began to waver. The minds of men are flexible. "After all" there is no sense in continuing to resist; "after all" perhaps "they" are right, at least in this or that respect, and it will become increasingly dangerous to oppose "them"; it is comforting to be on the side of the strong; "after all" the outside world recognizes "them" as a legitimate government. In November 1932 six million voted for the Communists, four million for the anti-Nazi Catholic Zentrum, and seven million for the Social Democrats. A part at least of these voted a year later for and supported Hitler's party. When the war was nearing its end the fascination of the invincible Hitler disappeared because his power was dwindling and new conspiracies emerged. After the war millions of pro-Hitlerites returned to the anti-Nazi parties; they did so again without compulsion—they were drawing their own conclusions from their experience; they were influenced mainly by the power of their victorious enemies. The emotional evolution in Italy after Mussolini's defeat in July 1943 and in Japan after her defeat in September 1945 was of a similar nature. In all these instances the popular sentiment was genuine: there was little pressure on the people and a great deal of individual self-adjustment at every turn.

## INVINCIBILITY

The present political system in Russia is being maintained to a very large extent by a psychological process similar to that we have been discussing. At the root of Soviet law and order lies respect for an overwhelming and invincible state power. Communist faith and conviction are attributes of a small minority, nor is cynicism the prevailing state of mind. For the great majority the social and political system is a fact made of iron and steel: "they" are terribly strong; there is no sense in fighting "them". One must adjust oneself mentally to the circumstances "for the duration." Only a small minority of course may be imprisoned; a few are punished as a lesson to the others; the rest submit and endure years of privation without protest or resistance. There exists a process of personal recognition of a political



system similar to that of diplomatic recognition by foreign powers.

Stalin derives his high position from mass emotions of this kind. He is honoured by many *because of his unique power*. This respect has never been affection for a likeable personality; even the members of his party and those closest to him are not attracted to his personality as they were, for instance, to that of Lenin or Bukharin. Stalin rarely appears in public, his personal life remains a secret, people do not know him, he has had no real personal friends. But the veneration accorded him is genuine—only it is purely a veneration of power.

A few months ago I met Bek Bulat, a former Communist professor in Russia and now a "non-returner" in Germany. He told me of his life as a student in the Communist Academy in Moscow in the early 'thirties, about his first "deviation" toward "rightist" communism and his subsequent punishment. Before his fall, however, the young student's feeling toward Stalin was enthusiastic admiration for the *strong Leader* whom he had not known. "I would have done *anything* for him," he said. "I am not exaggerating when I say that I would gladly have died for him." In the few public processions in which Stalin appears (for instance, at funerals of his colleagues) he is guarded by a group of loyal and devoted young men; his life depends on this loyalty and devotion. Bek Bulat was one of these young men. "When Stalin stood and marched beside me, my excitement was terrific. He did not speak a word, but from his personality something emanated that held me, and all of us, in a state of the highest suspense." I recalled Tolstoy's incomparable elucidation of this political emotion; in *War and Peace* the young lieutenant Nikolai Rostov for the first time comes face to face with the Tzar during a military parade: "Nikolai felt that at one word from that man he would rush through fire and water, to crime, to death, or to the grandest heroism, and so he could not but thrill and tremble at the sight of the man who was the embodiment of that word. . . . How happy Rostov would have been if he could have died on the spot for the Emperor."

Fearful respect on the part of the governed is a corollary of



the power of the rulers. Tremendous power produces tremendous respect. It has taken long years to instil in the Soviet people this kind of awe, or rather veneration by fear. Systematically, the conviction has been inculcated in the people that no man on earth, no party in Russia, no foreign nation or combination of nations will ever be able to vanquish Stalin or his Union. All means of propaganda have been applied to this end; all kinds of proofs have been presented—from the awful fate of a rebellious village somewhere in the steppes to the suicide of Adolf Hitler; from the executed tsar to the executed socialist foes of communism; from Trotsky to Bukharin; from the failure of the blockade three decades ago to the failure of American policy in the Balkans, in China, in our time.

Invincibility! Reading the curious stories about how the Soviet army “single-handedly” defeated Germany, administered the “decisive blow” to Japan, “liberated” Europe and half the Orient, people in this country usually take them simply as a series of hunter’s tales, arrogant boasts. They are more than that. They have their place—and a highly important place—in the political set-up. It is no exaggeration to say that the Soviet system will stand or fall on this notion, this fable of invincibility.

How effective this fable is is clear from the fact that tensions behind the quiet façade have been numerous and police alone could not hold them in check. The failing of “observers” in Russia has been that they do not see (and cannot know) the hundreds of conflicts, great and small, in the inner workings of the state’s machine; they do not learn about the extensive intrigues and ominous rivalries—this ersatz political life in a dictatorship; they do not meet the men who have been relieved of important posts and transferred to insignificant jobs. Among the relegated and resentful there are men of strong will and political ambition who have their own ideas and plans. And then there is the vast field of social tensions, especially severe in the post-war years. How often have industrial workers, with their poor living conditions and poor pay, been on the verge of a strike! How often have passions

risen to the boiling point in a dilapidated village when the kolkhoz was ordered to deliver additional grain! But strikes materialized rarely; nor did the farmers, except in a few cases, rebel against the authorities. With almost unbelievable patience they obeyed and fulfilled the orders. Official Moscow tells us that the people gladly endure privation if the Soviet state needs their sacrifices; we know what such stories are worth.

What makes the millions and the individual submit is the impact of power inflated to the level of legend of invincibility. In the first phase of the war, when German armies were winning victories, millions of Russians turned against the Moscow régime. When the tide turned, the peculiar Soviet "loyalty" won out anew.

A great army of "lecturers," in addition to the press and radio, are systematically trained in what to tell the people and how to tell it. No other country can point to an army of 250,000 "propagandists" whose duty it is to talk to large and small gatherings and answer questions. The topics of discussion, prescribed by Moscow, are usually phases of Soviet economy and international affairs. The speakers tell their audiences that after the war the West tried to oppose the Soviet government in Poland but was forced to retreat; it wanted to prevent the socialist transformation (with Soviet aid) in Rumania and Bulgaria but did not succeed; it had to abandon its hopes in Hungary; Prague appeared the last ditch, and here too the efforts of the West were in vain. And how America strained to save China for capitalism, they say. How many millions she spent in Korea and Indo-China, Malaya and Indonesia . . . Failures were heaped on defeats, and there has been nothing but fiasco on a global scale! "We have taught them lessons! Our star shines bright, while their eagles scream and cry . . ." No nation and no government is strong enough to oppose the régime of Stalin! The implied half of the story does not escape the listeners: if all kings and presidents bow to Stalin, if nothing on earth can stop him, how dare little Ivan or Vasilii oppose, disagree, or disobey?

The treatment of Yugoslavia, for instance, was in the tenor



## POWER AND PRESTIGE

of the propaganda of invincibility: contempt for the *small* Tito who dared to disobey the *great* Stalin. In an unprecedented diplomatic locution employed in a Soviet note to Yugoslavia (August 31, 1949) the Soviet land was compared to an elephant and Yugoslavia to a puppy. Citing Krylov's fable, the note said that "the *puppy* is feeling so big because she is barking at an *elephant*." No doubt was left in Soviet minds that Soviet power could crush Tito any day if it wanted to.

### SOVIET PRESTIGE

All these elements of the impact of power are embodied in the greatly inflated new notion of Soviet prestige. This notion, which has often appeared strange or even ridiculous to Western observers, is more than "Asiatic ceremoniousness" and something other than strict adherence to diplomatic protocol.

The Big Three conferences had to take place in Russia or in a country within her orbit; when the conference started, Stalin, the host, was the last to arrive. A second armistice with Germany had to be concluded in Soviet-occupied Berlin because the first had been signed in the West. American missions in the Soviet zone were ordered to shrink and they shrank. American diplomats were arrested in China and chased from Bulgaria; American citizens disappeared behind the curtain, and nothing happened. American fliers were shot down over the Baltic, and there was no retaliation. American property was being confiscated even when there was no economic reason for it. These are only small occurrences, but they indicate how far the new idea of prestige has progressed in Russia.

To orthodox bolshevism, until about 1925, prestige in international affairs was a ridiculous, obsolete notion, stuffed-shirtism, medieval stiffness, stupidity, like arguments about precedence, like duels. Things began to change in the 'thirties, but the real return to the old idea occurred during the war of 1941-45, when the new empire emerged. Prestige became tantamount to overwhelming strength. It became one of the pillars on which the edifice of the Soviet Empire rests. This particular prop must be constantly watched, repaired, and

strengthened if the great building is to stand and grow. Prestige is also the leaning pillar of Stalin's new structure. It sounds absurd but it is true: this empire can withstand famine, war and purges, but it cannot withstand a substantial diminution of its prestige.

Because in this case prestige is not one man's or the government's. It serves as the confirmation of a faith in the social revolution of our days, the "inevitability" of its victory, the "iron force" of the "historical laws" discovered and put to work by Marx-Lenin-Stalin, and the belief that the non-Communist nations are doomed. A gap in this hard armour of prestige—defeats and retreats (even purely diplomatic defeats and retreats)—is bound to shake more than the Leader's reputation and the "scientific forecasts"; with them the loyalty of the satellites at home and abroad will be put in question.

To Moscow, the cold war has been a balance with two scales: on one lies the United States, on the other the Soviet Union. The balance is carefully watched lest America become heavier and outweigh Russia. With calculated moves, Moscow tries to damage America's prestige all over the world by making her look ridiculous, helpless, and weak. Every ounce of prestige lost by the Americans is an ounce gained for Soviet prestige.

An eloquent instance of what the new Soviet prestige means was supplied when the blockade of Berlin was to be lifted in 1949. This sample of international politics deserves to be studied in university seminars and by all associations dealing with foreign policies.

To lift the blockade Stalin had simply to rescind the order of June 21, 1948, and permit traffic to and from Berlin. Such a directive from Moscow, however, would have sounded like an admission of defeat, and this impression had to be avoided at all costs. Stalin cannot be defeated. Instead of a unilateral instruction Moscow wanted an "agreement" with its former allies. Agreement is multilateral; it appears as the product of concession on all sides, a fair deal; it is a product of negotiations.

On January 30, 1949, Stalin gave an answer to questions



asked by Kingsbury Smith of the International News Service about the Soviet intentions in the Berlin affair. The statement was not very promising and was far from indicating a Soviet surrender. Acting on instructions from the State Department, Philip Jessup, the American representative in the UN, made use of the statement to start negotiations and asked his Soviet counterpart for elucidation of certain points made by Stalin. A month elapsed before Jacob Malik returned a favourable reply to the American queries. In the end the decision was taken to retreat in Berlin, to relieve Molotov of his office, and to augment the vehemence of the anti-Tito drive. To maintain prestige, however, Moscow presented as a "condition" of lifting the blockade the promise of an early meeting of foreign ministers.

The American State Department did not immediately grasp what Moscow intended; nor did it want to present the Soviet defeat as what it was. Vyshinsky was not asked what kind of proposals he would make at the projected conference of foreign ministers, whether his plan for Germany would differ from the old one, or whether he believed a conference would be worth while. Secretary Acheson gave his consent unconditionally. Then the Soviet radio announced that the Western powers "were compelled to agree" much against their will to a conference in Paris. They were under pressure, the *New Times* explained, of the "great popular movements" against the Atlantic Pact and for peace and security. It began to look as if the lifting of the blockade was a significant victory for the Soviet government.

This impression was heightened as the negotiations developed. The Paris Conference lasted a month. It was one of the most futile parleys in the whole series of abortive post-war meetings. Vyshinsky failed to make a reasonable effort at agreement in connection with either the German or the Austrian issues. He repeated old phrases and suggested obsolete programmes. The conference ended with an empty official communiqué to the effect that the ministers would confer again during the UN General Assembly in the autumn. And that was all.

Soviet spokesmen and the Soviet press again hailed the "Soviet victory." "The decisions of the Paris Conference mean a new great success of the consistent peace policy of the Soviet Union." Secretary Acheson told the press that he was not happy about the conference, and Vyshinsky retorted, "The foreign ministers *have had* to agree to four-power instead of three-power discussions." As to President Truman's pessimistic remarks about the conference, *Pravda* noted that "the Western powers have been *compelled* to recognize" that their policy in Germany was a fiasco!

About the same time the Soviet failure in Greece became manifest; the withdrawal of the guerrilla forces and their subsequent transfer from Albania to the east marked the end of a great and costly drive, a campaign approved and supported by the Soviet government. Again the government in Washington and the American delegation in the UN preferred to pass over in silence rather than take advantage of this Soviet failure. At Lake Success the Americans pretended to listen with interest to Vyshinsky's ideas on how to normalize the Greek situation—after their troops and supplies had helped to defeat Vyshinsky's efforts to dislodge the Western powers from Greece. There was much hypocrisy in these discussions—and not only on the Soviet side . . .

In the end, while the Soviet blockade of Berlin was lifted and the free world knew the truth before the people of Russia, Vyshinsky walked around with the scalps of his adversaries hanging from his belt, *Pravda* told its readers that the "imperialists" had gone from one defeat to another, and Stalin celebrated his birthday as the political strategist who knows no failures.

The American attitude toward this issue has been equally significant. Without realizing the deeper meaning of prestige within the framework of Soviet policy, Washington has tried to spare Soviet sensibilities and not hurt Soviet prestige. George Kennan of the State Department wrote a commentary on the Truman Doctrine for *Foreign Affairs* in 1947 which he signed "X." This semi-official article intelligently analyzed the "sources of Soviet conduct." It broke with all



appeasement policies and arrived at the conclusion that only firmness can "contain" Russia. Coming as it did at the end of the appeasement era, this conclusion indicated considerable progress in understanding of Soviet policies. Mr. Kennan also noted the peculiar sense of prestige in Kremlin policy. But he said:

While the Kremlin is basically flexible in its reaction to political realities, it is by no means unamenable to considerations of prestige. Like almost any other government, it can be placed by tactless and threatening gestures in a position where it cannot afford to yield . . . It is a *sine qua non* of successful dealing with Russia that . . . demands on Russian policy should be put forward in such a manner as to leave the way open for a compliance not too detrimental to Russian prestige.<sup>1</sup>

"To leave the way open" means that while trying to stem the Soviet offensive the United States must at the same time build a golden bridge for a Soviet retreat; it must help the Kremlin to take a way back which can be pictured as a successful offensive. Policies of this kind, sensible in other cases (for instance, in regard to small nations), cannot be effective in the case of the Soviet Union because they leave untouched the very source of imperial power and the cement that holds the structure together—prestige and the legend of invincibility. Besides, no power of the calibre of the Soviet Union today ever retreats by means of golden bridges constructed by others for this purpose. Neville Chamberlain, the great engineer of golden bridges for the Führer, failed invariably because the latter had already trespassed the invisible safety line. When the safety limit is passed great warriors and dictators are no longer amenable to reason.

The new agglomeration of nations and territories, loosely knit and held together by awe and force, is apt to fall apart as fast as, or faster than, it was brought about. No nation of either ancient or modern times has disintegrated so easily and as rapidly as have the great empires. Stalin has stated that

<sup>1</sup> "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, XV (July, 1947), 575-576.

contrary to historical experience his structure can be held together permanently because it is run by communism. A similar conviction guided Alexander the Great, Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Hitler.

If inflated prestige ceases to operate the empire is doomed. Impact of power ceases to tell when its sources, awe and fear, vanish; usually, but not necessarily, because of a failure in war. Then the all-powerful régime stands before its peoples as a weakling, and grievances and concealed hate come to the fore. Weakness generates weakness just as, in the era of the empire's ascendancy, power generated power. Now failure is heaped on failure as prestige, this armour made out of nerves and notions, begins to crack. The way back, the disintegration of the empire, is in all its stages the logical and historical opposite of the previous rise.

The armour can be pierced by military means, and this has been the usual way of disintegration of empires. If there is today, however, a remote chance of recovering security for the world and of liberating the enslaved peoples of the Soviet "sphere" without war, that chance lies precisely in the vulnerability of the armour of prestige. In our times diplomacy serves as ersatz war because its blows can be hard and telling. Once the fiction of the infallibility of the Leader and of the inevitability of advances and victories is refuted by facts, and once concessions to and retreat before other powers become necessary, the Soviet state will appear as the isolated, weakened outpost of the Communist revolution. Its domination over half the world will be at an end; internal forces, formerly chained, will break through the political wall.



### Chapter III

## HOW COLD WARS END

**I**N THE history of Russia's foreign relations during the last two centuries two types of policies have been followed: the one prevailed in relations with the countries of the "West" (Britain and France); the other toward central Europe, meaning Russia's immediate neighbours (Prussia-Germany and Austria-Hungary).

The relations to Britain were on the whole marked by coolness and by sporadic conflicts. Cold wars were the prevalent phase of the relationship. When the cold wars developed into military conflicts, the latter did not assume the size of great wars; they were fought on the periphery of the empire; and they invariably ended in Russia's defeat. Now the United States has joined the "West" and inherited much of this tradition.

Unlike the permanent cold war with the West, good relations have prevailed on the whole between St. Petersburg and Berlin; until 1914 there had been no wars between them for 160 years. Once war broke out, however, it grew swiftly in size and intensity into the greatest wars in human history.

In the international developments during former cold wars between Russia and the West there is a hint as to our common future—no more than a hint, but in these days of darkness even a hint is important.

Russia's ascendancy, the product of centuries of development, became manifest with the great victory over Napoleon in 1812. The international position of France at the time was in a way analogous to that of Germany in the Nazi era—the position of the strongest power on the continent. Like Germany in 1940-42, France had met no serious obstacles in her

European campaigns; she concluded with Russia a kind of Stalin-Hitler pact, the Treaty of Tilsit, directed against England as well as the rest of the independent nations. While Europe was being rapidly converted into a French orbit, Russia proceeded (as she did again in 1939-40) to acquire territories from her neighbours, Finland and Bessarabia. England, actually isolated, expected hard fighting, perhaps a French invasion. Her isolation was not at all splendid, and the lack of allies was painful.

Then Napoleon, the great statesman and strategist, made the move which, when it was later repeated by Hitler, we called a "blunder" or "stupidity"; he turned against his great ally. And the consequences were similar to those that befell Hitler. Perhaps that act of Napoleon's was neither a blunder nor stupidity; perhaps it was inevitable. On the whole continent Russia was the only power able to oppose the victor; Russia's fears were likely to increase as the empire of the conqueror engulfed new lands and new peoples. The two colossi, armed to the teeth, stood alone on Europe's vast plains. The conqueror had to reduce the last continental power before turning against highly dangerous maritime England. In both cases the act was a necessity. Wars of such scope have their own logic, to which even the greatest lords and rulers must bow.

Invading Russia, Napoleon occupied a corridor leading to Moscow; and he reached Moscow. Victorious, he could not however end his campaign with the conquest of Moscow; he must go deeper, conquer more—and be sucked into Russia's steppes, forests, and sands. He had to retreat. Overwhelmed by the geography of Russia and Europe, he was broken when he ended his Russian campaign. He was defeated not so much by superior Russian arms as by Russia's vastness—as was the conqueror of 1943 on an even larger scale.

And exactly as in 1941, an alliance was sealed between the two empires, Britain and Russia. East and West suddenly met—the West at that time being represented by Britain alone. The subsequent British victories were hailed in Russia as triumphs, and when Napoleon definitely went down the two allies, Russia and Britain, dominated the scene. The



## HOW COLD WARS END

development in 1945 was similar, with the United States at the head of the Western nations.

After Waterloo came the cold war, which was of a slower tempo than the cold war of today. Everything was slower in those days—transportation, the mails, shipping, armies and navies, wars, and history. International developments which today require a few years to ripen, a century ago evolved in decades.

After France's defeat Russia's star shone more brightly than ever. She was the liberator, the moral "saviour of Europe." No nation on earth could rival her armed forces. If she wanted, it seemed, she could continue to add new territories to her realm, and her international influence extended far beyond specific areas and lands. Russia's tools in Europe were the German states and Austria; her influence, however, was felt everywhere—in Spain, Latin America, the Mediterranean, the Pacific. In the United States the Monroe Doctrine was the American reaction to this ubiquity of Russia's power.

The cold war of the first half of the nineteenth century was fought mainly, though not exclusively, between Russia and Britain. At that time Britain was rich, strong, ubiquitous, often aggressive, and expanding. In her opposition to Russian interference she was frequently seconded by France. Defeated France made a remarkably fast recovery, not only in her economy but as a world power, too; as a world power she opposed Russia. Despite the multitude of Franco-British antagonisms that existed at the time, the two nations formed a united front against Russia.

The cold war developed according to its own rules and logic. Growing in intensity, enveloping new peoples and continents, it was becoming universal; it was an obsession both in London and in St. Petersburg.

In the Near East Russia's successful drives against Turkey and Persia meant a failure for British policy; the closing of the Black Sea to foreign navies meant a defeat for the West. The Polish uprising, its suppression by Russian arms, and the abolition of Poland's autonomy created in France and Britain

a profound public antagonism toward Russia. The new Russian drive to the Amur and into China was frankly anti-Western; it too had an adverse effect on relations with London. The situation became aggravated after Russian forces crossed the border to quell revolutions in Hungary, Italy, Rumania in 1848-49.

Now the cold war approached its climax and logical end. It had to be fought out by armies and navies as a hot war. In 1853 Russia resumed her drive to the south. Russian armies invaded the Turkish provinces of Moldavia and Wallachia. In the cold-war climate of those years this attack was a signal for the creation of a coalition of small and great powers antagonistic to or apprehensive of Russia. The coalition was headed by Britain and France; Sardinia joined later; Austria, concerned about the Balkans, supported the coalition; even Prussia became unreliable.

The war lasted about two years and ended in a Russian defeat. Despite the magnitude of the coalition and Russia's size, this "world war" of a century ago was not a great war. Its main theatre was the Black Sea and the Crimea; no large land battles were fought except between Russia and Turkey. British losses amounted to only 22,000 men and those of France to 95,000. What Russia lost in the peace treaty was not overwhelming and hardly affected her position as a great power: she ceded to Turkey an area in Bessarabia and renounced the right to maintain a naval force in the Black Sea.

Despite the local character of the war and the insignificance of Russia's territorial losses, the defeat caused extensive changes in her foreign and domestic policies; it was remarkable that the far-reaching reforms which followed should have been brought on by a war fought on the outskirts of the empire. The Crimea, a sparsely populated territory, had been won from Turkey and added to Russia not long before. With no railways to the south the battle areas were somewhat inaccessible, as were the areas coveted by the victorious coalition. In this respect they would be comparable to Manchuria or Turkmenia in the framework of Russia today.

After the war Russia withdrew from her advanced positions



all over the world and for a time stayed out of new conflicts. "*La Russie se recueille*," the foreign minister announced officially, signifying the new trend in Russian international relations. Her army was unimpaired, however, and her economy had not suffered; she remained a great power, although the backbone of aggression was broken.

Internally a modernization or "westernization" of Russia took place. Initiated by the government itself, this did not shake the basic political structure of the nation or reduce the privileges of the sovereign. Nevertheless the reforms of 1860-65 brought a rapid annulment of many medieval social and political practices. The abolition of serfdom and slavery wrought an upheaval in the lives of a people a great part of whom were serfs. Higher education was modernized, and "autonomy" granted the universities—a highly valued privilege in all autocracies. Corporal punishment was abolished. A new system of local government was introduced. Censorship, though not abolished, was reformed and eased. The obsolete and cruel system of justice was replaced by a new set of institutions and laws on a level with the best models of the West. Finally, general conscription—a measure considered democratic in all Europe—was introduced to replace the old system which had required soldiers to serve in the army for decades and sometimes for life.

Antagonism between Russia and Britain continued. It flared up more than once in the subsequent decades, without, however, assuming bellicose form for half a century: this was one of the consequences of the Crimean conflict.

Peace between Russia and the West was precarious, but it was peace. In 1877-79 Russia won a war with Turkey and stretched her hand far into the latter's territories and waters; under British pressure and following Bismarck's advice the Russian government however renounced most of its conquests. A decade later a new controversy arose over the Russian advance in central Asia but this did not lead to a military conflict either.

A new phase of the cold war between Russia and England

started in the late 1890's, when the persistent antagonism again took overt form. The main theatre of the cold war was the Far East, and its main concerns were north China, Korea, and the Yellow and Japanese seas. In 1900, after an attempt to establish a peaceful *modus vivendi* by a division of spheres in China, Britain and Russia reached an impasse in their relations: Russia occupied Manchuria and pressed the Chinese government hard, defying Britain and wounding her prestige all over the Orient.

Russia appeared by far the strongest power in the East. With the great Trans-Siberian Railway nearly completed, troops could be easily transported, and there was apparently no force on earth able to contain Russia. The "Russo-Chinese empire," a combination much like the Soviet Empire in the East today, was about to emerge. London was helpless. Even the best of navies could not halt armies, nor its cannon balls reach Mukden or Peking. Russia was the only land power in Asia; any other power trying to operate in the Far East would have had to ship armies across the seas, and all were reluctant to do so on a large scale. "No one can stop Russia," the Kaiser said, "from marching with her armies to Peking."

Antagonism toward Russia mounted in London, but London was impotent. In St. Petersburg hostility to England animated the court: "Our principal and most dangerous enemy," wrote the minister of foreign affairs, "is indoubtedly England"; and the tsar noted on the report, "Indeed."

And now again, as before the Crimean War, other nations began to move in opposition; the aggressiveness of Russian policy—today we would use the term "dynamism"—jeopardized the interests of more than one of them. Japan felt apprehensive lest northern China and part of Korea should fall to Russia. The United States, under Theodore Roosevelt, was disappointed in the failure of its open-door policy. China, on paper an ally of Russia, was obviously losing faith in her great protector. A formal alliance of Britain and Japan, concluded in 1902, was the logical outcome.

War broke out in January 1904. It was fought by Japan, but Japan was only the first fighting line of a great coalition. Her



ally Britain was committed and prepared to jump to her aid should other powers join Russia; President Roosevelt, too, was resolved to aid if necessary. Actually Japan's war was backed by a group of nations, headed by Britain, which were opposed to Russia's expansion in the Far East.

The war was fought thousands of miles away from Russia proper; the interest of the Russian people in the issues—control of Manchuria, Korea, the Yellow Sea—was nil. Russia's forces were defeated on land and sea, her navy was destroyed, the land battles ended in a debacle. For an empire as large as Russia the territorial losses were not significant, and no indemnity was paid. But again a lost war was the cause of extensive changes in Russia's foreign policy and internal affairs.

Russia's drive against England had practically ended. Before long negotiations started for a comprehensive Russo-British treaty, which was signed in 1907. In the Far East Russia's unilateral operations against Japan and England were not resumed. She joined the Western camp against Germany and was England's ally in the First World War.

The developments on the Russian domestic scene were of even greater significance. A popular movement emerged which assumed the aspects of a revolution. Despite the fact that this was suppressed, in the end a great many important reforms were introduced after the war: the first Russian constitution; the first popular elections; the Duma, in which the right of free speech was abundantly used by the opposition (including Lenin's party); a press, which, while not free, was able to attack the government sharply (*Pravda* came into existence during that period); the first trade unions in Russia and a considerable advance in social conditions for labour; some agrarian reforms—all these and more followed the defeat of 1905.

A certain similarity exists between the two Russian cold wars of the last hundred years; important conclusions can be drawn from the analogy, and some useful hints as to the

present situation can be derived from studying the historical pattern.

First, during the whole of that century any considerable extension, by force, of Russia's realm and her sphere of influence in eastern Europe or the Far East that was bound to upset the equilibrium of forces provoked strong opposition on the part of her immediate neighbours as well as of the greatest world power of the time; this opposition expressed itself in the emergence of coalitions of the nations endangered by Russia's expansion; the coalitions were headed by England; after a certain time a tense war of nerves evolved into a real war.

Second, the wars were fought on Russia's periphery, in areas far away from and loosely attached to the heart of the nation; measured by the scale of wars of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the conflicts were neither world wars nor great wars; Russia's territorial losses were small; her economy was not disrupted, nor did she disintegrate as a great nation; her military force was not destroyed in the war but continued to be large.

Third, the Russian defeats were essentially wounds inflicted on her prestige; these were felt both inside Russia and abroad, and as such further illustrate the meaning and significance of the impact of power throughout Russian history. In the eyes of the Russian people the nimbus of invincibility of the government was destroyed. With the decline in prestige, defects of the political and social edifice became apparent; the homogeneity, political solidarity, and self-assurance of the ruling group were upset; opposition raised its head; far-reaching reforms were carried out in accordance with demands of the opposition.

Fourth, each of the wars proved that a disproportion had existed between Russia's limited power potentialities and her potent *Drang* in various directions; each confirmed the thesis that even a great land power cannot win against the greatest sea power. Russia withdrew along the whole line.

After her defeats in the two cold wars, in 1856 and 1905,



Russia suffered a third great blow in 1917-18, but now Germany rather than England was her chief adversary; now the war was fought in the densely populated, important provinces of European Russia; Russia's losses were huge, as were those of Germany; the defeats destroyed not only the prestige of the Tsar's government but the very structure of the nation. The emergence of a dictatorial new power was part of the military defeat.

In international affairs, too, the consequences were different from those in the two preceding cases. After her disintegration Russia had to start from the beginning; so did Germany in the Weimar period. For a number of years the two weakened neighbours balanced one another and secretly tried to assist each other's military rehabilitation. The balance between a strong Russia and a strong Germany-Austria had served to eliminate possible conflicts for a long period before 1914. From 1919 to 1933 the equilibrium between the two weak neighbours had the same effect. The resurrection of Germany's power progressed more rapidly and was more thorough than that of Russia; soon the German force was no longer balanced by a counterforce in the east. Hence the aspirations, belligerence, and wars of the Nazi era. Since 1944 the new power position of Russia, attained at the expense of Germany, has had a similar effect and has resulted in the growing tension of our times.

In the multitude of wars fought by Russia and in the various anti-Russian alliances of the last centuries, the two types of warlike combinations have never merged: it was either the West or Germany. The Atlantic Pact, which actually includes Germany, may develop into the first attempt at such a combination.

## Chapter IV

# ONCE AGAIN INFERIOR RACES

ONLY BLIND partisans of Soviet policy believe that solidarity of purpose, "enthusiasm" holds up the great national edifice, that devotion to a common cause animates the human units of this macrocosm. But if this is not true, what is the real state of affairs? What holds together the parts of this structure—government and people, army command and rank and file, industrial captains and industrial workers, professors and students, prosecutors and prosecuted? What is the essence of the Soviet political structure?

Two answers can be given to this question. One, set forth in the preceding chapters, stresses the ability of a modern dictatorship to grow and acquire new power by exerting total control, by brow-beating and driving the opposition into silence, by creating new social groups whose interests are vested in the new system, by demonstrating the futility of resistance, by exaggerating its own greatness, and by propagating the legend of invincibility. Persuasion and winning the people over to new ideas are not the most important part of the task, but rather imbuing them with the conviction that the political system under which they live is here to stay for the foreseeable future. This is the concept of the impact of power.

There exists, however, another and more primitive attitude to the "Russian puzzle." With 1947, as hope began to fade that Stalin's Russia was becoming democratic, peaceful, and modest in aspiration, this trend of thinking began to take hold of the public mind in the United States: the Russian state is the embodiment of the qualities of the Russian people, who are by nature aggressive, brutal, and imperialistic, having no



sense of or need for democracy; that normal relations with Russia cannot be expected in the near future; that, like biblical Sodom, Russia must be erased from the face of the earth because of the inherent wickedness of its people.

This trend is to overlook cleavages between governments and their peoples and to assume that all nations—democratic and undemocratic alike—have the governments they deserve; that Hitler's government was a true reflection of "Germanism"; that Stalin's régime represents the Russian people and any differentiation between Politburo and people is a deception; that every people's "national character" is reflected in its system of government. Either Stalin or no Russia at all! Disappointment in Stalin and in communism is expressing itself in sweeping hostility to the Russian people as a whole.

Divergence of views on the "Russian problem" is not merely theoretical; it extends to the field of practical policies as well. The two attitudes call for two widely different courses of action toward Russia. In world affairs today there is no more important task than the solution of the question one way or another.

There are few observers who in their own political conceptions have achieved clarity on this issue and integrated their views into a coherent *Weltanschauung*. In most cases disconnected fragments of ideas float on a muddied surface.

Some examples may help to illustrate. After the elections of the Supreme Soviet in March 1950, Mrs. Anne O'Hare McCormick, one of the most intelligent and best-informed political analysts in the United States, said in a newspaper article that

perhaps the majority [of Russians] believe that the make-believe is the real thing. They vote willingly, often enthusiastically; that they can vote only one way, for a single list of hand-picked candidates, does not bother them much because they know so little about the normal working of democracy. They are told day after day that they have the only genuine brand and they have no experience of any other. So it is not surprising that they do not perceive the

difference. The pathos lies in their eagerness in going through the motions.<sup>1</sup>

It is difficult to see how an American commentator without an intimate knowledge of the country can know what is going on in the hearts and brains of millions of Russians. What can be the source, other than the imagination, of this conviction that "the people" really believe the fairy tales they are told and do not "perceive the difference"? Here is, however, a statement of another prominent American-born journalist, Edmund Stevens of the *Christian Science Monitor*, who as a correspondent lived among the Russians for a long time and has the rare advantage of speaking Russian fluently:

"We Russians," a friend once remarked to me, "can claim one priority that nobody ever will challenge. We have invented the world's dullest Parliament."

My friend was giving an average citizen's opinion of the Supreme Soviet of the U.S.S.R., defined by the Soviet Constitution as "the highest law-giving organ in the land."

The best indication of what the Kremlin bosses really think of their sovereign Parliament is the fact that the Supreme Soviet is the one government section whose proceedings are open to foreign correspondents and diplomats. In the Soviet Union this is a sure sign that no state matters of consequence are to be dealt with.

As matters now stand, while the Supreme Soviet may serve to confirm fellow travellers abroad in the belief that the Soviet Union is a democracy, it impresses few thinking individuals inside the country. The disillusionment my friend voiced is extremely widespread. From the internal propaganda standpoint the Supreme Soviet is something of a liability, since its threadbare, humorless parody of parliamentary forms serves as a constant reminder to the Russians of how unfree they are.<sup>2</sup>

According to this narrative of Stevens', the Russians are politically as intelligent or as stupid as any other people, and their preference for the knout type of "democracy" would

<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, March 13, 1950.

<sup>2</sup> *Christian Science Monitor*, November 17, 1949.



seem to be a myth. But here again are the observations of an able diplomat, Walter Bedell Smith. As ambassador to Moscow General Bedell Smith was hardly in a position to see or hear very much himself, his official position and lack of familiarity with the language making this impossible; but this is the theory he expounds in an otherwise excellent work:

The Soviet citizen today believes he has the fruits of democracy. He can vote, and the fact that he casts his ballot for one candidate selected by the only existing political party is without significance to him. He can be elected to and sit on the legislative body of his state, or of his national republic, or of the Soviet Union. The fact that in this capacity he acts only as a rubber stamp for the party and, as I myself have seen, would pass a national budget without question or discussion in the short space of fourteen minutes does not impress him as unusual. He has no standard of comparison.

He has in Stalin the "little father" that the psychology of the Russian people seems always to have required—the demi-god who represents all that is great and good in the national cosmos.<sup>1</sup>

General Bedell Smith's service in Russia started early in 1946, and his opinions were obviously formed in that period of war and victory. He did not ponder the mass purge of Soviet generals that ended in 1939 or the presence of a multitude of Soviet officers among the DPs, nor did he consider the dissatisfaction that mounted in the army and among the people after the war. Hence his simplified conception: Stalin is the reflection of the Russian soul; the Russians do not want and do not need anything different.

The same view was voiced by Congressman Charles Eaton, then chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, when he wrote that Russia is "a ruthless and brutal nation . . . neither the Russians nor their tyrants understand the meaning of democracy. They are *Slavs*, which means captives or slaves."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Walter Bedell Smith, *My Three Years in Moscow* (Philadelphia, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1950), p. 130.

<sup>2</sup> Charles A. Eaton, "Let's Have a Showdown with Russia," *American Magazine*, CXLIV (August, 1947), 21, 92.

This approach is also seen, in a somewhat more sophisticated version, in the writings of Edward Crankshaw, for several years the correspondent of the London *Observer* in Russia. "The very nature of the Russian people," he writes, "feckless, erratic, expansive, lazy, spasmodically energetic, enthusiastic, and blankly apathetic by turns, invites harshness . . . Autocracy is in the blood . . . The very nature of the Russian people, whatever the intellectuals may say, makes some sort of rigid autocratic régime inevitable."<sup>1</sup>

Late in 1949 a 609-page book appeared in Switzerland under the title *Massloses Russland* (Extravagant Russia). On the jacket the main characteristics and conditions of the Russian people are noted as the author has seen them: "Extravagance—Exhibitionism—Masochism—Despotism and Submissiveness—Police and Espionage—Punishment and Deportations—Bureaucracy—Corruption—Larceny—Sanctimoniousness—Goodness—Impotence—Pretentiousness and Boastfulness—Dishonesty and Deceitfulness—Vagrancy—Cruelty—Destructiveness." Only a few pages of this book were actually written by the author, Harry Harvest, himself. For the rest, he collected derogatory comments about the people of Russia from hundreds of other books in all languages. Since every nation has at some time in its history been involved in wars and rumours of war, and since personal hostility can arise out of more than one cause, Harvest is able to quote over two hundred Russian and non-Russian authors to demonstrate his theses that the Russians are

A wild, cruel, revengeful, dreadful people.

The Russian is not able to distinguish between morality and immorality.

This people prefers slavery to freedom.

What Agesilaus said of the peoples of Asia is true of the Russians: They are excellent slaves, but they would make the worst free men of the world.

The Russian people are the most obedient of all, if they are rigorously ruled; yet they are incapable of governing

<sup>1</sup> *The Listener*, December 22, 1949.



## ONCE AGAIN INFERIOR RACES

themselves. As soon as the reins are loosened, they lapse into anarchy.

The genuine Russian is always ready to tell a lie.

In Russia everything is delusion and deceit.

The Russian sucks in pugnacity with his mother's milk. It remains inherent with him till the grave.

Only a few years ago the political literature of the West was indulging in extravagant praise of the Russians: the Russians were intelligent and conscientious, ardent patriots, devoted warriors, courageous and irreproachable; they exceeded the British and Americans in their propagandistic skill. An American professor of sociology found a "congeniality of the American and Russian mentalities," namely, in both cases, "open-mindedness and breadth of mental outlook, cosmopolitanism, and self-esteem without disparagement of others or any disposition to claim a God-given superiority over 'inferior' groups . . . independence of thought; tolerance of the opinions, manners, and customs of others . . ."<sup>1</sup> The British and French press abounded in similar statements.

If one set out to compile a parallel collection of quotations relating to other peoples the picture would be just as bad as that presented of the Russians today. Hundreds of quotations can be found referring to the flippancy and stinginess of the French and the avarice, cruelty, bad habits, and superiority complex of the British. A sizable library could be accumulated to show that the Germans possess all the vices the world has ever known. Even the young United States has managed in the course of its short history to arouse mixed sentiments, and the international Communist press is not the only source of sweeping negative and offensive statements about America.

To point to so-called "specific traits" of this or that nation is the easiest way for lazy minds to solve great historical questions. Why were the British so cruel in suppressing the uprisings in India in the nineteenth century? Because ferocity is an element of the British national character. Why did they systematically indulge in diplomatic intrigue? Because a

<sup>1</sup> Pitirim Sorokin, *Russia and the United States* (New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., 1944), p. 55.

scheming mind is one of their characteristics. Why have the Germans produced so many outstanding composers and poets? Because fine sensibility is a part of their character. And why were the Germans so brutal in the last war? Because brutality is natural to them—just as Russians are alternately magnanimous, hearty, intelligent, dutiful, brave, and rude, inhuman, stupid, and lazy.

In 1947 the United States Department of the Navy launched a scientific study of the Russian question. The project was conducted by a large group of scientists and researchers (over fifty men and women) and was centred at Columbia University. The late Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Geoffrey Gorer of Great Britain—all of them well-known anthropologists of the same school of thought—headed the project. The task was to investigate "contemporary cultures," with particular attention to the Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, and Jewish cultures. The Department of the Navy not only financed the project but followed its progress attentively. In 1949-50 the first results of the study began to appear in print.

Before summarizing the findings, it is necessary to explain why the government selected anthropologists for this essentially political and sociological task, and why this particular school of anthropologists was preferred above all others by the Department of the Navy.

In 1944-45, while preparing to take over the occupation of Japan upon her expected defeat, the United States government sought advice from a number of American experts as to whether or not the Japanese would be ready to collaborate with the occupying power, whether the emperor must be dethroned, whether a Japanese government could be trusted to carry out orders of the occupation. If the answers to these questions were no, an American government on the pattern of the OMGUS in Germany would have to be set up. The United States was not inclined to undertake far-reaching reconstruction of the Japanese way of life unless this appeared to be urgently called for; it preferred to limit its interference in Japanese affairs to the necessary minimum.



Among the advisers of the government were American and British anthropologists. In the minds of many people in and around the departments of the government the belief has grown in recent decades that the political activities of a nation are dictated mainly by its specific "national character" and that a nation's government is the reflection of this national spirit. In regard to Japan this theory meant that the Japanese would "behave" in accordance with some basic, intrinsic laws of their "character" and that this character is of a determined pattern. The scientists of anthropology, professing to possess knowledge of this pattern, proceeded with their work. The answers that they gave did not differ very much from those given by other people: the Japanese character would not bar collaboration with the occupying Americans.

In her book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, Ruth Benedict reported that in June 1944 she was asked to try to predict the behaviour of the Japanese in the event of an invasion of their country. Other people—"social scientists"—she says, were analyzing current developments and social statistics; she sought her answers in the "culture" of the people. She found that the Japanese are both "aggressive and unaggressive, militaristic and aesthetic, insolent and polite, rigid and adaptable, submissive and resentful." These two sides of the Japanese character (are they not also present in every other "national character"?) have their origin, according to Mrs. Benedict, in the Japanese methods of education. Up to the age of six or seven children live freely and happily—"they do not know shame," "they are like little gods in their little world." After that age education in restraint, circumspection, discipline, respect begins. Thus a "discontinuity" in the upbringing of the young generation becomes a fact—a decisive fact of Japanese "culture." And "because of this deeply implanted dualism," the character of Japanese adults is dual, too.<sup>1</sup>

Another American anthropologist of the same school, Margaret Mead, frankly stated her view in *And Keep Your Powder Dry*, published during the early part of the World War

<sup>1</sup> Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (Boston, Houghton Mifflin, 1946), pp. 2, 3, 270, 290.

II. "Democracy is not something that can be added or subtracted . . . *It would be impossible suddenly to introduce 'democracy'* . . . Banishing the bogies of racism . . . *does not mean that we must end up by saying that all peoples are alike . . .*"<sup>1</sup> She then tried to explain Pearl Harbour and the American reaction to it and the American kind of warfare on the basis of precepts taught young American children by their mothers: "fair play," "pick on someone your size."

This primitive kind of political philosophy has also been used against Germany. Miss Mead asserts that the Germans cannot be democrats; Bertram Schaffner, of the same group, in *Father Land*, published in 1948, has presented a theory of nazism in reverse: whatever bad traits are to be found in a people he discovered in the "German character." "The German does not grasp the full implications of the term love; the Germans as a people are aggressive and cruel; Nazism and German thought were fundamentally the same . . . Anti-Nazis are atypical Germans"; Germans are "scornful and suspicious of foreign ideas."<sup>2</sup> The book is a sermon of hate presented as a scientific study. If only half of what the author sees in the German character were there all Germans should be sent to a new Dachau for wholesale extermination.

The most curious among these studies of peoples is *The American People*, a book by Geoffrey Gorer. Do we want to know, for example, why fears are frequently expressed "that America will be reduced to want, perhaps to actual starvation, if it lets its food or resources or money outside the country"?<sup>3</sup> Mr. Gorer's answer is quite simple: American babies are fed according to time-table, however hungry they may be between feedings; "and so most American babies learn to experience hunger and the fear of hunger." Hence the "anxiety induced by an unbalanced budget, by the fear of depletion of its possible assets." What is the explanation of isolationism in the United States? It has grown, says Mr. Gorer, as a basic element

<sup>1</sup> Margaret Mead, *And Keep Your Powder Dry* (New York, William Morrow and Company, 1942), p. 20 ff. Italics mine.

<sup>2</sup> Bertram Schaffner, *Father Land* (New York, 1948), pp. 27, 30 ff.

<sup>3</sup> New York, W. W. Norton & Co., 1948, p. 77.



of the American's character: there is "the desire to be loved coupled with a strong fear of rejection, of being treated as unworthy of love"; this refers to private as well as to political affairs. Out of this fear often comes the "rejection before love is rejected" by the other side. Hence springs "emotional rejection of Europe."

Behind these concepts we begin to see the acrobat dressed in a scientific gown. This impression is strengthened when we are introduced to other extraordinary findings of Mr. Gorer's. The reason for the alleged "addiction of most American men to milk as a drink" is the hunger of the child as well as the very great erotic fetishist value given to women's breasts in contemporary America . . . well-developed breasts under a tight-fitting overgarment are thought to surpass almost any amount of nudity. . . . The cleft which separates the breasts is almost the greatest object of erotic curiosity, and a number of English films in which the actresses wore Restoration costumes have been considered too indecent to be shown to the American public without fichus . . ."<sup>1</sup> It has been generally thought that the high amount of consumption of milk in the U.S.A. was a direct result and symptom of American well-being. Now we have a more profound explanation. There is a store of such statements in the book. Some are curious and some are absurd. For example, the House of Representatives often acts "most irresponsibly," expecting the Senate to correct it; this stems from the tendency of American boys to expect their elder brothers to straighten things out! Lawyers are so numerous in the Congress and among American presidents because Americans have great admiration for the spoken word; and this in turn is the consequence of the boasting and story-telling which are allegedly an outstanding trait of the American child.

This should be sufficient to indicate the scientific fare of a group to which the government of the United States has assigned the study of the "Russian question."

The *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* for April 1949 contains an article by Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead with

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77-78.

the neutral title "Child Rearing in Certain European Countries." The scientists profess to have discovered some basic elements of Russian character which have a direct impact on political attitudes. "Personal outbreaks," we are told, are characteristic of this people, as are violence and the notion that "strong feelings have a positive value". Russians do not understand "privacy," and their language has no word for it. Russians believe it is futile to oppose whatever authority is in power. These alleged traits of character serve to explain Russian internal affairs, the violent revolution, the unrestricted dictatorship, the collectivist economy. As for international affairs and in particular the attitude toward the United States, it is allegedly an element of the Russian's character easily to become friend, then enemy, then friend again. And add to this "a lack of responsibility, no sense of duty to the state, lack of neatness, an incurable gabbiness."

Geoffrey Gorer's findings in the Columbia project are reported in his book, *The People of Great Russia*. Gorer says of himself that in the 'thirties he was a "fellow traveller," a "pink"; he visited Russia briefly but his knowledge of Russian, he admits, is limited. In the late 1930's he lost his faith and turned from his former admiration to a sweeping negation of everything Russian. He did not discard, however, his belief that the Soviet government is an embodiment of the essence of the people's character. He is still convinced that "the Leader, whether Czar, Lenin or Stalin, has always been completely idealized by the mass of the population which loyally adheres to the régime; he is, in the most liberal sense of the word, superhumanly perfect in knowledge, truth, and foresight."<sup>1</sup>

Gorer's main contribution to the project was his discovery of the relation of Russian character to Russian methods of swaddling babies. We learn that these methods are inhuman. After tight wrapping in a blanket, "the bundle" is taped with crisscross lashings until, as the Russians say, it is like "a log of wood for the fireplace." The savage Russian mothers, the

<sup>1</sup> Geoffrey Gorer and John Rickman, *The People of Great Russia* (London, The Cresset Press, 1949), p. 166.



story continues, are sometimes merciless: the child "cannot breathe and is saved from strangling only by loosening the bindings." There is "less relationship between mother and baby in Russia than elsewhere; the mother is not specifically a maternal figure." The Russian method of swaddling creates "physical isolation" of the baby. "This inhibition of movements is felt to be extremely painful and frustrating and is responded to with intense and destructive rage, which cannot be adequately expressed physically."<sup>1</sup> As a consequence, "destructive rage would appear to give the infant a feeling of overwhelming destructive strength . . . Infants sometimes exhaust themselves physically and psychologically with unassuaged rage." The attitude toward authority, too, stems from the system of swaddling: "The analogy of swaddling illustrates very clearly the relations that exist between people in authority and people under authority. The qualities most demanded from authority is (*sic*) that it should be firm and consistent, neither too tight nor too loose, and, above all, not shifting capriciously from excessive severity to excessive lenience."

Out of these characteristics Gorer derives the peculiar traits of Soviet policy: dictatorship, cruelty, aggressiveness, expansionism. Even the "confessions" in the famous Moscow trials are nothing but a repetition of the "repentance" of the Orthodox Church to which the Russians are accustomed from their early childhood . . . And yet on the eve of the publication of Gorer's book "confessions" began to multiply in Catholic countries and Protestant provinces—in Hungary, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Poland. Cardinal Mindszenty, it may be noted, was neither swaddled in the Russian way nor educated in Orthodox concepts of sin and repentance . . .

This astonishing information about the habits of Russian mothers and babies was collected not in Russia but in America, where a certain number of old Russian immigrant mothers were questioned. The political bias in these theories becomes obvious when the differences are noted between the cruel Russians and other, more sympathetic peoples of eastern

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 123-130, 174, for this and following quotations.

Europe—Poles, Ukrainians, and Jews. Although the manner of swaddling babies is the same throughout Russia, Poland, and the Ukraine, the “scientists” have found differences, nevertheless. The Polish baby is swaddled “for hardening,” because it is fragile. The Jewish baby is swaddled on a soft pillow; the Jewish mother lays “stress upon warmth and comfort” and “sings to the baby as she swaddles it.”

The political conclusions arrived at by Mr. Gorier are logical:

It is useless to try to make friends with, or win the sympathy of, the mass of the Great Russian people, in the hopes of producing transformations of policy . . . . No techniques are yet available for eradicating the all-pervasive suspicion which Great Russians, leaders and led alike, feel toward the rest of the world. . . . Great Russians, leaders and led alike, will continue to go all the time to the limit of their strength. They will expand their boundaries like a flooded lake. . . .”<sup>1</sup>

Other, less vociferous anthropologists reject the swaddling theory as an attempt to substitute a “diaperology” for the science of anthropology. Everyone with some knowledge of Russia and the Russians will confirm that many of the personal traits discovered by these scientists in the Russian character do not exist at all; others are common to many peoples of Europe.

It is strange that men and women of scientific training should believe in such theories. Much more bizarre, however, is the fact that behind them stand agencies of the United States government. The best excuse that can be offered in justification of the highly placed officials who sponsor and pay for this work is that they do not realize its meaning and its implications.

In no other case is the anthropological method less applicable than in regard to Russia. Russia has gone through a series of political earthquakes in the course of the last four or five decades; she still is in the process of transformation. It is precisely in the case of revolutions and counter-revolutions that anthropological methods prove most ineffective as a source of explanation and interpretation.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 191-192.



## ONCE AGAIN INFERIOR RACES

Anthropology in the main describes and explains static conditions in human societies; it has been most successful in describing cultures on a low level of civilization. Historic development, however, and in particular the rapid development that has occurred in our era, is beyond the province of anthropology. If the political behaviour of a nation is pre-determined by what is called its "culture," how does a generation of revolutionists grow up? Whence comes the urge for freedom in a traditionally authoritarian society? France was an authoritarian monarchy up to 1870; since then it has been a republic with wide political freedom. The French who revolted in 1870-71 were reared and educated in the same way as other subjects of a king or emperor. No amount of anthropological study will suffice to explain such changes. In the case of Germany the millions of liberals and socialists who opposed the Kaiser and Hitlerism were children of the same "culture" (of the "Fatherland"), the adherents of Prussian monarchism and national socialism. No scientific attempt has been made by anthropologists to explain these phenomena.

Nor can they explain the divergence in the political attitudes of the Russians. The conservative tradition was strong in pre-revolutionary Russia, yet liberal trends grew rapidly during the half century before 1917. The majority of the population was clearly opposed to the governments of the period 1905-17, and the régime acknowledged this fact by its electoral laws. Democratic parties had a huge following—of men swaddled, reared, and educated in the same way as the adherents of the old monarchy. In the Soviet period oppositional currents and undercurrents often acquired tremendous strength. The attitude of the local population toward the occupying German forces in 1941-44 is another enigma for the anthropologists. All this is evidence of a state of political liability which cannot be linked with stable methods of child rearing.

## DIAPEROLOGY AND RACISM

In Germany a theory akin to anthropological concepts was based on "race" and "blood" instead of diapers. Its opponents—though cowed and inarticulate during the Nazi years—

refused to accept the racial approach to the Russian problem with all its ominous implications. The controversy raged for years, reaching its critical stage in 1942-44. It was still unsettled when the Führer put a bullet through his head.

To Hitler and his party the Slavic "race" was inferior to those of the West and, above all, to the Germans. Among the Slavs, the Russians stood at the bottom of the scale. Since, according to the Nazi racial theory, an inferior race could no more change its psychological attributes than a black or yellow race could change the colour of its skin, the inferior Russians were permanently excluded from the civilized world (whatever that term may have meant to the Nazis). A Russian state could never be recognized as the equal of a German state. Rather, the Germans should look upon it as a permanent menace to civilization and feel in duty bound to defend humanity against it.

The only legal opposition in Germany was the conservative Deutsch-National party, whose adherents were antagonistic to the philosophy and policies of nazism. They carried on the Prussian traditions of Russo-German amity, which started with the Holy Alliance following the Napoleonic wars and included Bismarck's policy of friendly co-operation with the Tsar's government, covering a century in which Germany had grown powerful and rich. In the eyes of this numerous and important group Russia as a political state was Germany's equal and the Russians as a people were capable of progressing to a higher rank among the civilized nations than has been theirs. This viewpoint was shared by the majority of Hitler's generals, who, with the exception of the few Nazis among them, regarded France as a greater menace than Russia. The military leaders were never convinced of the necessity for the attack on the Soviet Union, and when the eastern campaign was launched they favoured a programme pledging continued national sovereignty for an independent, non-Communist Russian state as a means of promoting popular uprisings and the formation of Russian armies to fight against Stalin.

Hitler, however, remained inflexible in his policy toward Russia, not even shrinking from the ultimate implications of



his racial theories. If the Russians were driven by their nature to provoke war and conquer their neighbours, then they must be subjugated, decimated, disarmed for all time and deprived of political independence. The Führer had envisaged the future war long before 1939; the prospect of exterminating millions of "inferior" beings of other nations was certainly one of the strongest of the incentives that drove him on to military adventure. Among these races the Russians, who "breed like insects," were in the front rank. In a blunt speech to the generals of the S.S. in October 1943, Gestapo chief Heinrich Himmler laid down the following principle for the east:

Whether nations live in prosperity or starve to death interests me only in so far as we need them as slaves for our Kultur; otherwise, it is of no interest to me. Whether 10,000 Russian women fall down from exhaustion while digging an anti-tank ditch interests me only in so far as the anti-tank ditch for Germany is finished. . . . It is a crime against our own blood to worry about them and give them ideas, thus causing our sons and grandsons to have a more difficult time with them.<sup>1</sup>

The Nazi leadership based its preparations for the war against Russia on the following directive from Hitler: "The war [against Britain] can only be continued if all armed forces are fed by Russia in the third year of the war. There is no doubt that . . . many millions of people will be starved to death if we remove from the country the things necessary for us."<sup>2</sup> In 1942 Martin Bormann, Hitler's aide, declared in a memorandum that "the Slavs must work for us; in so far as we do not need them, they can die. Their breeding is undesirable."

Extermination of part of the population was point one in Hitler's racist programme for Russia. Equally logical was the abolition of the Russian state; Russia and the Soviet Union must cease to exist. "The USSR," Hitler told his closest advisers, "must be considered dissolved. We will never withdraw from the east." For "tactical reasons," Hitler decided

<sup>1</sup> *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression* (Washington, 1946), IV, 559.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, V, 378.

not to make this view public while the war was on. He frankly told intimate colleagues, however, that the Russians, as an inferior and dangerous race, would have to be governed by Germans; and he even started to form a staff for the future colonial administration.

Point three in Hitler's programme called for permanent prohibition of a Russian army; a nation of slaves could not be permitted to bear arms. "Never again," said Hitler in July, 1941,

must it be possible to create a military power west of the Urals, even if we have to wage war for a hundred years in order to attain this goal . . . security for the Reich exists only if there are no foreign military forces west of the Urals; it is Germany who undertakes the protection of this area against all possible dangers. . . . Only the German may carry arms, not the Slav, not the Czech, not the Cossack nor the Ukrainian!<sup>1</sup>

The question of Russian armed forces had a direct bearing on the war situation. From a purely military point of view the German army leadership felt that a Russian anti-Soviet unit would be a great advantage to Germany. Formation of such an army was still possible in the early part of the war, and the Reichswehr chiefs urged Hitler to lose no time. The latter, however, felt grave misgivings about allying himself with a Russian army and was convinced that it would ultimately oppose him and turn against Germany. Irrked at the generals' insistence, he vetoed once and for all any plan to create an effective Russian armed force on German-held territory. "Even [General] Kluge,"<sup>2</sup> he said in 1943, "has mentioned more than once that it will be a great relief for us if we start building a Russian army. Let no one delude himself: we shall never create a Russian army."

History was to prove that both were right—Hitler and his generals. It was true that, without the aid of an additional allied army, Germany was foredoomed to lose the war. But it

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, VII, 1087-1088.

<sup>2</sup> Field Marshal von Kluge was German commander-in-chief in southern Russia. He later committed suicide to avoid arrest by the Gestapo.



was also true that even an embryo Russian army would inevitably have turned against the Nazis.

Just such an embryo was the so-called Russian Army of Liberation led by former Soviet General Andrei Vlasov.

When the early military reverses shattered the myth of Soviet invincibility, all dykes were burst, and the population of occupied western Russia, which knew nothing of the true nature of Hitlerism, greeted the invaders with wild enthusiasm. Young girls tossed flowers to the advancing Germans, and old women embraced the horses of the Germany army. This was the liberation! What was later to become known as the Vlasov movement was the product of this spontaneous popular upsurge at the outset of the war. Long before General Vlasov assumed its leadership—before he was even captured by the Germans—the essential preconditions of his movement were present in the feelings of the people of every area from which Soviet authority and troops were withdrawing.

All the latent hatred of the régime—indignation at the collectivization of the land, the purges, arrests, inquisitions, deportations, and shootings—suddenly erupted. Whole armies surrendered within a few weeks; in a short time the Germans had rounded up two million prisoners. This was a rebellion of the people against its government, but of a curious kind. It was a rebellion led by Communists against Stalin's communism. What had occurred was a split in the Communist ranks—probably the only form political change could have taken under the repressive conditions of the Soviet Union.

General Vlasov, the leader of the dissidents, was a Communist of long standing. He had fought on the Red side in the Civil War, and had since been entrusted by the government with important military-political assignments. He had never been involved in any of the recurrent purges. In 1941 he was wounded but recovered. At the time the Germans took him prisoner he was participating in the defence of Moscow.

General Vasilii Malyshev, one of General Vlasov's most important advisers, was a former professor at the General Staff Academy and an old Communist. Major General Feodor

Trukhin was a graduate of the General Staff Academy. General Georgii Zhilenkov, another of Vlasov's associates, had been a high-ranking political commissar in the Red Army. Colonel Sergei N. Buniachenko had been personally decorated by Stalin for his part in the Manchurian border war with the Japanese in 1938-39. Miletii Zykov, actual author of some of Vlasov's manifestoes and proclamations, was likewise a Communist of long standing. Colonel V. Mal'tsev, a prominent aviator, held the title of Hero of the Soviet Union. This list could be extended indefinitely with the names of officers in the middle and lower ranks, many of them Communist party members.

Vlasov won wide support in the occupied areas; there is evidence that a great majority of the people were prepared to follow him in the first phase of the war. His programme, which he set forth in speeches and proclamations, promised not only "the overthrow of Stalin's tyranny" but, in addition, "restoration to the peoples of Russia of the rights gained in the popular revolution of [February] 1917," "an independent state without Bolsheviks and exploiters," and "abolition of the kolkhozes and forced labour."

Had Germany authorized the creation of a Russian army under Vlasov, it might have appealed strongly to the Red Army and its leaders and have become a formidable anti-Soviet force. At the same time it would inevitably have developed anti-Nazi tendencies, since nazism's racial philosophy and war aims were antagonistic to everything Russian. Hence Vlasov was not and could not be trusted in Berlin. He was regarded as a vulnerable propaganda asset, not an ally.

A memorandum by Dr. Taubert of the German Propaganda Ministry, dated December 31, 1944, stressed the unreliability of General Vlasov and his movement:

The Vlasov movement does not consider itself linked with Germany to the bitter end. It has strong Anglophile sympathies and entertains the idea of some day changing its course. The Vlasov movement is not National Socialist. . . . [It] is a diluted fusion of liberal and Bolshevik ideologies. The essential fact is that they do not fight the Jews; they



fail to consider the Jewish question at all. The Vlasov movement thinks it can laugh off the National Socialist ideology. It does not represent a great Russian national renaissance, like fascism in Italy and national socialism in Germany.<sup>1</sup>

Among the dangerous ideas circulating in the German army Heinrich Himmler discovered a new watchword: "We can never beat the Russians; only the Russians themselves can." Addressing a group of high-ranking German officers in Poznan in October 1943, Himmler complained of a stream of letters from the front indicating a new attitude toward the Russian people:

We have been mistaken about the Russians, these letters all say. The Russian is not the robot we thought he was back in 1941. We are here in the East now, and our eyes have been opened. This is a noble people; it possesses every good quality. . . .

Then they talk about General Vlasov and his Army of Liberation, and they report what General Vlasov always tells us: Only Russians can beat Russians; Germany has never conquered Russia. Give us 500,000 or 1,000,000 Russians, arm them well, train them along German lines in the best way possible, and Vlasov will be willing to march against the Russians and destroy them for us.

It is dangerous, this talk to the effect that "we cannot conquer the Russians; only they can do it themselves." Vlasov lectured in Paris, Brussels, and Berlin. Members of the German leadership corps listened in amazement and gaped at this masterful Bolshevik. . . . Vlasov told them: "It is disgraceful how the Germans treat the Russian people. We Russians abolished corporal punishment decades ago. . . . You Germans have restored corporal punishment. Fie! how vile and barbarous." And everyone in the audience felt ashamed. Then the man said: "The Russians are extremely national-minded. You must appeal to this spirit of nationalism. You can see it from the fact that the conqueror of Field Marshal Paulus [Konstantin Rokossovsky] was imprisoned by the GPU for many years, flogged, beaten,

<sup>1</sup> "Fuerschnitt durch die Tätigkeits des Arbeitsgebietes Dr. Taubert," an unpublished document.

## Chapter V

# THE SIX WARS OF THE SOVIET UNION

**I**T is perfectly safe to say that not a single high-ranking Communist in the Soviet Union believes in the possibility of a lasting peaceful settlement of the present world-wide contest for power. The only question in the minds of the Soviet leaders is when and where the conflict will break out. This certainty in Communist reasoning is based on an all-encompassing philosophy in which wars are expected to serve as one of the primary levers of history—at least until capitalism's final extinction.

The tremendous militancy of the Soviet government—"dynamism" is the polite new term—stems not from any inherent qualities of the Russian nation but from the warlike and messianic ideology of its Communist rulers. To initiators of a world movement which aims to spread its power all over the globe the future appears as a series of crises, at least some of which must be initiated by the movement itself.

In this conception the great transformation is stretched out over a long period—fifty years or more—filled with wars and revolutions. In Lenin's time the stress was on revolution; in Stalin's day it has been rather on war. In both cases, however, this transition has been conceived as a series of catastrophes, with wars born of revolutions bearing in turn new revolutions.

Pacifism has always been emphatically rejected by the Soviet leadership. More than that, it has been viewed with sarcastic contempt. "Peace at any price," Lenin used to say during the First World War, is a "silly wishful sigh." "Pacifism and abstract propagands in favour of peace," he wrote, "are one of the means of fooling the working class. Wars are inevitable under capitalism. . . . The party of the working class is obliged



to fight against the trends of pacifism and democratism in general."

Of course, war is a calamity, and it is acknowledged that millions of human beings perish in its course. But with characteristic consistency Lenin rejected peace slogans and refused to advocate "premature" peace whenever he deemed continued fighting likely to yield desirable results.

The young Lenin's attitude toward the first Russo-Japanese war, that of 1904-05, was to become typical of international Communist policy a decade or two later. The war was most unpopular with the Russians, and continuous defeats in the Far East contributed vitally to the outbreak of revolutionary activity in Russia. Political strikes, agrarian disorders, protest rallies, processions followed in rapid succession, until in October 1905 constitutional reforms were promised and, the following year, the first Duma was convoked. Moderate liberal parties as well as socialist groups were demanding "peace at any price," willing to offer Japan far-reaching concessions to bring the war to an end. But Lenin, in his first pronouncement on the issue of war and peace, disagreed with all of them; twelve years later these differences in outlook were to lead to a civil war.

"The cause of Russian liberty and the struggle of the Russian working class for socialism," Lenin argued, "depend in large measure on the military defeats of the autocracy. This cause has gained much from the military debacle."<sup>1</sup> In 1905 Lenin reiterated his rejection of "peace at any price";<sup>2</sup> he wanted the war to continue; to be sure, war means sacrifice, yet he felt it childish to base one's policy on "such trivial reasoning."

This attitude towards war—an attitude which both Lenin and his successors later had occasion to implement in greater detail—springs from the premise that today every great war engenders revolution and every great revolution is linked with war: "The world has not known a single great revolution that has not been connected with war," Lenin proclaimed. And since the Russian revolution was only the first in a new series

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works* (3rd Russian ed.), IV, 165.

<sup>2</sup> *Vperiod*, January 14, 1905, No. 2.

of revolutions, wars are inevitable and have to be expected in the future. "The history of great conflicts, of revolutions, teaches that wars, a series of wars, are inevitable." It would be futile and foolish to combat inevitability, Lenin concluded; "rather than fight it, prepare for it."

Having as yet no reason to use diplomatic terms and to conceal his real intentions, Lenin frankly stated in 1916 why he rejected the programme of disarmament. In an article entitled "The disarmament Slogan" he said that revolution means dictatorship and "dictatorship is state power based directly on *violence*. Violence in the twentieth century, as in the era of civilization generally, means neither a fist nor a club but *troops*. To put 'disarmament' in the programme is tantamount to saying in general: 'We are opposed to the use of arms.' There is as little Marxism in this as there would be if we said: 'We are opposed to violence.'"<sup>1</sup>

Stalin rounded out this theory. It now appeared that the great social revolution would be drawn out over a long period of time with ups and downs, tides and ebbs, a period of ferment. Stalin, like Lenin, never condemned military action *per se*. He liked to recall Lenin's division of all wars into "just" and "unjust." By definition, all wars waged by the Soviet Union are "just" and progressive.

In 1950, at the height of the Soviet "peace drive," Stalin found it appropriate to publish for the first time his letter to Maxim Gorky, written back in 1930. At that time the Soviet press had pictured the Western powers (England and France) as feverishly preparing for an armed attack on Russia; the Soviet government stressed, on the other hand, its own "peace-loving" nature and policy. To support this propaganda Maxim Gorky proposed to publish a monthly magazine which would systematically depict the horrors of war; and he wrote to Stalin about this idea. The magazine never appeared, for Stalin rejected the plan, writing to Gorky:

On the book market there is a multitude of publications describing the "horrors" of war and filling people with disgust towards *any* war, not only an imperialist one but

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works* (3rd Russian ed.), XIX, 353.



any other. These are bourgeois-pacifist publications of no great value. . . .

We are not against *every* war. We are *against* an imperialist war, as a counter-revolutionary war. But we are *for* a liberating, anti-imperialist, revolutionary war, although such a war, as is known, not only is not free from "horrors of bloodshed" but abounds in them. . . . It seems to me that Voronsky's<sup>1</sup> intention to campaign against the "horrors of war" does not differ much from the viewpoint of the bourgeois-pacifists.<sup>2</sup>

Neither Lenin nor Stalin ever seriously renounced recourse to aggression. They never advocated the principle of waging "defensive wars" only. There are cases—they have maintained—when a Soviet state must embark on aggressive warfare. It is a mere technicality which of the two opposing camps fires the first shot, i.e., which is the "aggressor." If the cause is righteous, initiative is but a question of expediency. "We would be not only fools but criminals," Lenin said, "if we promised never to commit an act which could be considered aggressive in a military, strategic sense." The theory is that no action of a Soviet government, not even an unprovoked attack, can be termed aggression: the aim of whatever it does or contemplates doing is defence of the oppressed and exploited.

Maurice Thorez, the French Communist leader, made the following statement in February 1949: "The Soviet Union can never become an aggressor in regard to another country. . . . The Soviet army never invaded another country . . . The land of socialism cannot conduct a policy of aggression or war, which is characteristic of imperialist powers." Thorez studied communism in Moscow when his country was occupied by Germany and he certainly knows the facts about Soviet Russia's aggression against her neighbours; also he is well acquainted with the doctrine permitting and prescribing aggressive warfare whenever success is likely. What Thorez really meant to say is that Russia is not and cannot be called

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Voronsky, an able literary critic, was expelled from the Communist party in 1928.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Stalin, *Works* (Russian ed.), XII, 176.

an aggressor, even when she starts war and pursues a policy of conquest, because she invariably fights for the "high ideals of liberation."

### THE "INEVITABLE WAR"

The concept of the "inevitable war" likewise stems, as we have seen, from the founding fathers of communism. The discrepancy between the official peace propaganda of the Soviet government and the bellicose trend in its ideology, between its propaganda of international disarmament and its urge to arm, is represented by two Soviet agencies: the Foreign Office and the Comintern. The first has served as the diplomatic fountainhead of "peace" propaganda, while the second has laid down the law of conduct and told the harsh truth to its adherents.

In the early 1930's Litvinov's star was rising in the international sky: peace and disarmament were the passwords of the day. Contrary to Lenin's precepts and the basic Communist ideology, Litvinov repeatedly stressed the outright repudiation of war by the Soviet Union. "The Soviet Union," he stated before the Disarmament Conference in February, 1932, "rejects war as an instrument of national policy."

Once war is excluded as an instrument of national policy the Soviet Government sees no need for maintaining armies and other armed forces . . .

The sole aim of the Soviet Government is the building up of socialism on the territory of the Soviet Union . . . the Soviet Union requires, neither the increase of territory, nor interference in the affairs of other nations, to achieve its aim, and could therefore do without army, navy, military aviation and all other forms of armed forces.<sup>1</sup>

These statements succeeded in creating the impression that Soviet Russia would never fight unless attacked; that of all nations it was the most "peace-loving."

The claim that the Soviet Union "has no need" for a military force was taken over from the pacifist vocabulary.

<sup>1</sup> M. Litvinov, *The Soviet's Fight For Disarmament* (New York, International Publishers, 1934), pp. 12, 22.



However, the real attitude of every loyal Communist toward disarmament was based unalterably upon the programme of the Communist party as conceived by Lenin: this programme not only rejected disarmament (in a "capitalist world") but demanded arming and rearming to fight the "world's bourgeoisie."

"The Communist party emphatically rejects the reactionary illusions of *petit-bourgeois* democrats about achieving disarmament under capitalism. It sets against them . . . the slogan of crushing the resistance of exploiters, of a fight to victory over the bourgeoisie of the whole world, both in internal civil wars and international wars."<sup>1</sup>

The resolutions of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International in 1928 were in revealing contrast to what Litvinov was preaching. Stalin had just climbed the last rungs of the ladder to undisputed rule and mastery. One year earlier Trotsky had been exiled to central Asia and his followers were being persecuted. Zinoviev and Kamenev had lost influence. The new Congress of the Comintern reflected Stalin's ideas: it was Stalin's congress. To this very day its resolutions serve as official instructions to Communists in case of war; followed in 1939-45, they are still valid. What they frankly said about wars, defensive and offensive, was the opposite of what Litvinov was preaching at the same time to the world's public. Wars, they stated, are "inevitable," "revolutionary," and therefore "necessary."

The Soviet Union harbours no illusions as to the possibility of durable peace. . . . Wars between proletarian and bourgeois states will necessarily and inevitably arise.

Formal indications, such as offensive or defensive war, cannot serve [as a test to determine the nature of war. Communism has] to combat all high-sounding phrases like "we shall never permit another war," "no more war," etc. . . .

Leninism combats all pacifist theories concerning the abolition of war. . . . Wars of proletarian dictatorship against world capitalism are inevitable and revolutionary.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works* (3rd Russian ed.), XXII, 97.

<sup>2</sup> *Resolutions of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International* (1928), p. 9.

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Blind loyalty was henceforth expected from all Communist parties in case of Russian involvement in war. No matter what the cause of the conflict or who had started it, Communists all over the world were to rally automatically to the support of the Soviet armies. They were pledged to put party discipline above loyalty or duty to their own countries.

### THE SIX WARS

In the thirty years between 1920 and 1949 Soviet Russia has been involved in six foreign wars. Of these, four were offensive; the other two started as defensive and turned into offensive wars. Only once was an actual declaration of war issued.

In 1920 the young Soviet state had to fight its first international war (as distinct from civil war and the struggle against intervention). Under Joseph Pilsudski Poland concluded an alliance with Ukrainian leaders and, rejecting Lenin's peace moves, invaded Russia. In this phase of the war the Soviet government sought and was successful in enlisting the sympathies and direct assistance of a considerable group of its enemies' political leaders as well as generals and officers of the old army. A rebirth of elemental patriotism, the urge to defend one's country against an invader, came to the aid of Lenin's régime. At first victorious Polish troops marched deep into the Ukraine. Soon, however, the Poles, inexperienced and poorly equipped, were forced to retreat before Soviet counter-attacks. When the Red Army approached Warsaw, Lloyd George proposed that peace be concluded on terms which would have been exceedingly favourable to Russia. The Russo-Polish border should run approximately along the line which since 1945 has formed the frontier between the Soviet Union and Poland; almost all of eastern Poland should be ceded to Soviet Russia. This was more than Russia, still involved in civil war, exhausted and devastated after six years of fighting, could have hoped for from London, Paris, and Warsaw.

But Lenin rejected the British offer and decided to fight for Warsaw in order to sovietize Poland, and to drive farther west, on to Germany. The war of defence became a war of offence, with Germany the chief goal. The decision to reject



the peace offer was taken on Lenin's initiative and was supported by Stalin, Zinoviev, and Kamenev. Among the leading opponents of this stand were Leon Trotsky, Alexei Rykov, and Karl Radek (of whom only Trotsky belonged to the Politburo). The Petrograd Soviet, under Zinoviev's chairmanship, adopted a resolution demanding "No peace with Poland until the power of the bourgeoisie is broken and the Soviet Republic is proclaimed." Somewhat later Lenin explained his motives: he had hoped to break through Poland to Germany and give the Western powers "decisive battle."

If Poland had become a Soviet state, if the workers of Warsaw had received from Soviet Russia the help they expected and hailed, the Treaty of Versailles and the entire international system would have been shattered . . . a few more days of victorious advances by the Red Army, and not only would Warsaw have been taken—this would not have been so important—but the Treaty of Versailles would have been shaken.<sup>1</sup>

It was here that Lenin claimed the right in principle for a Soviet state to wage aggressive war. He took to task those who sought to distinguish "wars of defence" from "wars of conquest." "These are words which lost their meaning long ago," Lenin declared in a speech already quoted; "words of petty-bourgeois pacifism . . . We would be not only fools but criminals if we promised never to commit an act which could be considered aggressive in a military, strategic sense."

A Polish government of five prominent Communists was set up by Moscow, a forerunner of the "Lublin Committee" of 1944. It travelled with the Red Army and established headquarters at Bialystok, with the intention of proceeding into Warsaw as soon as the capital had been taken. But Warsaw did not fall. A "miracle" happened—one of those that, like the "miracle on the Marne" in 1914, sometimes change the course of history. The Red Army was repulsed; soon Moscow had to sign an armistice and then an unfavourable peace treaty. Trying to explain away the failure of this undertaking,

<sup>1</sup> Speech of October 2, 1920, in *Collected Works* (3rd Russian ed.), XXV, 402.

Stalin later accused Leon Trotsky and Marshal Tukhachevsky of faulty strategy in the campaign.

The Polish war provided a precedent, created by Lenin, which was incorporated into the stock in trade of Communist philosophy. It was thus that the conception arose that the Soviet state is entitled to conduct offensive wars—that *any* war waged by a government dedicated to the cause of “liberation” (as understood by Moscow) is *ipso facto* “just.”

If there was a lull in Europe in the 'twenties, there was none in Asia. In 1929 the Soviet Union waged its second war at the border of Manchuria, in perennial controversy over the Chinese Eastern Railway. Having secured the support of Chiang Kai-shek, the Manchurian “Young Marshal” Chang Hsuehliang seized the Russo-Chinese railroad on Manchurian territory. The action reflected an upsurge of national pride and self-assurance on the part of the Chinese; it was provoked by age-old humiliations and inequitable treaties. Having acquired possession of the railway by unilateral action, the Chinese had no reason to start military operations; at first there was no shooting.

Moscow had to decide between two courses of action: either to haul China before an international tribunal, with all the legalistic delays and dangers involved in such a procedure, or to resort to force. It was only a short time before this that the Soviet government had adhered to the Kellogg-Briand Pact outlawing war as an instrument of national policy.

When several diplomatic exchanges proved futile, the Soviet army struck; three months after the Chinese took over the railroad Soviet military forces went into action. At the same time Moscow rejected all attempts at mediation. The fighting cost thousands of lives and finally the Chinese yielded. The Soviet objective—a Russian railway running over foreign soil—as well as the pressure applied gave clear evidence that Moscow had by no means discarded war as an instrument for attaining its goals.

The Litvinov legend—the assertion that the Soviet government would never start a war—was kept alive throughout the



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'thirties in spite of growing aggressiveness on the part of Germany and Japan. It seemed to be confirmed when the Red Army conducted purely defensive operations against the Japanese Kwantung Army during the "border incidents" in 1938-39. Though the border clashes at times attained considerable proportions, Japan never intended them to develop into full-scale war. Thanks to the efficient spy ring in Toyko headed by Richard Sorge, Moscow was well aware of Japan's plans and limited objectives and knew the size of the military forces she had deployed.

In the 'thirties Moscow continued to amplify its doctrine on war and peace. Stalin and his lieutenants were coining new formulae, Lev Mekhlis, editor of *Pravda*, stated early in 1939 that in case of war "military operations must be transferred to the territory of the enemy; we must fulfil our international obligations and increase the number of Soviet republics."<sup>1</sup> The two parts of this programme were defined obviously enough. They were carried out to the letter in 1944-47.

Stalin himself discussed the prospects of war at length in his report to the Seventeenth Party Congress in 1934. He promised uprisings and revolutions in the rear of every "capitalist army" fighting the Soviet Union. But this forecast failed to materialize—just as did all the other high hopes which Moscow had for *popular* movements against Mussolini's, Hitler's, and Tojo's governments during the war. In his *Short History of the Communist Party*, published in 1938, Stalin reiterated that "Bolsheviks are not opposed to all kinds of war." They oppose only "unjust wars"; they approve and support even aggressive wars aiming at "liberation."

In the autumn of 1939 the Soviet government waged the third of its wars. Poland had already been invaded by Germany when the Soviet forces finally crossed the Polish border. The action was justified by Viacheslav Molotov, who declared a little prematurely that "the Polish state has ceased to exist." The Soviet aim, he said, was to liberate the Ukrainians and

<sup>1</sup> Eighteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Moscow, 1939. *Full Report* (in Russian), p. 273.

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Belorussians residing in Poland. This was an instance of "national goals" being attained by means of war. Military operations lasted but a few days, and eastern Poland was incorporated into the Soviet Union.

Only two months passed between the Polish campaign and the attack on Finland, the fourth of the Soviet wars. Once again Moscow provided a clear-cut sample of offensive war, though it tried hard to set its action in a different light. It announced that the first seven shots had been fired from the Finnish side; that Russian soldiers had been killed; and that an insurrectionist Finnish government had been formed under Otto Kuusinen. The Soviet government never formally declared war on Finland, alleging that it was merely giving assistance to its Finnish Communist allies. But the pretexts and excuses did not ring true; the facts were too obvious. After more than three months of fighting the war ended in a Soviet victory.

Then came the fifth, the greatest of the wars waged by the Soviet Union, the bloodiest and most gruelling of Russian wars. The war against Germany was defensive and remained so for at least three years.

In 1944, however, its character changed. As Allied military operations gained strength, old slogans were revived in Moscow: the war must be "carried to the enemy's territory" and the army must help "increase the number of Soviet republics." This formula was now cited as proof of uncanny foresight by the Soviet leaders and was abundantly translated into practice. The theory of a defensive war assumed a different aspect during this last stage of the fighting. Only a change in terms was now deemed opportune: the transformations were not into "Soviet republics" but into "people's democracies."

The war against Japan was the sixth and, thus far, the last of the wars fought by the Soviet Union. For Russia it was a separate war, not a part of the Second World War. The war in Europe ended early in May 1945; not until August 9 did Russian troops cross the border into Manchukuo. The attack



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was an example of purely offensive war, fought to attain "national goals." Japan had been defeated before Russia joined the conflict; six days later Tokyo capitulated. The war was short and victory cheap.

In the meantime Soviet concepts, goals, and programmes had significantly evolved. For the first time in Soviet history no justification was given for a war that was being started. The "Japanese danger" was not mentioned, in fact it no longer existed, nor could President Truman's request to join in an allied campaign justify the new war. The considerable territorial acquisitions promised Stalin at Yalta remained unknown to the people. But public opinion mattered so little already that no comprehensive explanation was needed. At this moment the pre-revolutionary notion of Russian patriotism—blind loyalty and no questions asked—triumphed again.

The acquisition of Chinese ports, the removal of industrial machinery to Russia, forced labour by Japanese civilians were the real aims of the war; large territories with non-Russian populations were annexed to the Soviet Union.

## THE UNITED STATES INHERITS FROM BRITAIN

For many years Moscow considered England its foremost international foe. Soviet propaganda was directed primarily against British imperialism; in the Near and Far East revolutionary movements of "colonial and semi-colonial" peoples were expected to shatter the might of the British Empire; the disintegration of the empire and a weakening of British influence would pave the way for communism's advance.

When Germany surrendered it seemed that the goal had been reached. From six years of war England emerged impoverished, exhausted, battered militarily as well as politically; centrifugal movements plagued the old empire, and within a few years the total population of her possessions had diminished from some 500 to some 100 millions. Official Russia viewed with satisfaction this fulfilment of its hopes.

By historical paradox, however, this obvious weakening of the main "enemy" was accompanied by a sudden growth of another anti-Soviet power, far stronger and richer than the

British Empire had ever been. The vacuum left by Britain was filled, not by the Soviet Union, but by another Anglo-Saxon anti-Communist power. While Britain, despite her world-wide resources and man power, remained after all an island in the Atlantic, the United States was a great continental nation with a population three times as large. British industry had supplied material to its allies in every war. Now the United States took over this function, and her industry greatly exceeded that of Britain both in quantity and quality. In the past British gold, loans, and subsidies had helped cement international coalitions and war alliances under British leadership: they seemed trifling compared to the American resources thrown onto the scales. Unlike the British Empire, the United States was not torn asunder by divergent national movements, diversity of languages, and separatist demands.

The Soviet Union, itself grown in power and prestige during the last decade, was face to face with a new leader in world affairs more formidable than its former adversary.

The only significant weakness of the United States, as compared with Britain, was its lighthearted, almost sentimental approach to international affairs—a vestige of the days when America was far from the boiling kettle of the Old World, when her attitude was of little consequence in international politics, and when she could still afford the luxury of isolationism without jeopardizing her own security. These weak spots of American policy Moscow made ample use of.

Unlike London with its cynical and experienced handling of foreign affairs, the United States continued to believe in "sincere and open" diplomacy and took such slogans as "peace-loving nations" and "big power harmony" in all seriousness. Washington wanted to believe in Moscow's honest devotion to the principles of the United Nations and its magnificent charter. It simply could not conceive of a great nation, only yesterday an ally, systematically preparing for an "inevitable war." "Let us trust Russia," Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt declared while still First Lady; "perhaps Russia will trust us." "Joseph Stalin is a prisoner of the Politburo," said President Truman. This difficulty of comprehension made



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American policy appear disoriented, inconsistent, and, to the countries of western Europe, unreliable.

From this state of affairs the Soviet government drew the logical conclusions. Without bringing matters to a head, it managed to take over Poland in the summer of 1945, the Balkans in 1946, Hungary in 1947, and Czechoslovakia in 1948; in 1947-48 its satellite in North Korea was established as a separate state, while the Communist armies in China took over all of China down to the borders of Indo-China. The native costumes cloaking these Soviet operations in both West and East could never have deceived the well-trained English eye; for a time, however, they readily produced the impression Moscow wanted in the United States. Soviet camouflage divided American public opinion, paralyzed the conduct of U.S. foreign affairs, and enabled the Politburo to realize its principal objective, the tremendous expansion of the Soviet sphere on the Eurasian continent, without recourse to war.

In the "distribution of forces" of which Stalin and his press used to speak the Soviet Union is supposed to occupy one extreme, the United States the other. But between them are said to be "intermediate elements," just as in the old-style theories of class struggle "the petty bourgeoisie, the peasantry, and the intelligentsia" were not irrevocably committed to either side and had to be won over to the side of the working class in order to ensure the isolation of the capitalists. Now that the class struggle has assumed world-wide geographical proportions, these "intermediate elements" are represented by the peoples and states which, politically and geographically, are located between the two giants of the opposite ends of the scales. These are the sixteen countries of non-Soviet Europe, plus Germany, which are too weak by themselves to play a decisive rôle in the impending world struggle but whose aggregate weight might tip the balance either way. In these countries capitalism has been shattered without being completely destroyed, yet the "proletariat," i.e., communism, has not won either. It is over these nations, over the soul and

power of every one of them, that the struggle with America must be conducted on the eve of the "last decisive battle." Such is the Kremlin's concept.

The internal "class struggle" becomes externalized; where it used to be waged vertically, between the layers of the social structure, it now becomes horizontal, stretching out to the countries of the world. Whatever ardour has remained from the days of the revolution is being marshalled and transformed, as if in a giant generator, into energy for foreign conquests. And that force which once routed the White armies, established a workers' government, built a new army from scratch, now seethes behind its own iron curtain and threatens to break through the dams and pour its red torrent over the fields of the European West and Asiatic East. Even in the stubborn irreconcilability of Molotov, the vituperations of Vyshinsky, the smug omniscience of the Soviet press the historian will find echoes of a passion that used to be genuine and of convictions that used to be sincere.

Such was probably the process by which the great energy of the French Revolution was transformed into the dynamism of the Napoleonic empire, into the invincible force that won battles, promised happiness to everyone, predicted security and glory for France, ably utilized "fifth columns," and irresistibly lunged forward and onward until it exhausted itself in its ambitious adventures and perished for ever, leaving Europe desolated and devastated. Since then the world has grown, and so has the scope of operations and annihilation; but the process has remained substantially the same. The chain of Napoleonic wars was repeatedly broken by peace treaties of ephemeral value, for the "lasting peace" was but a breathing spell. In the same way today the energy of Soviet policy, projected abroad, makes any attempts at peaceful accord momentary and illusory. The chain of Stalin's wars remains unbroken—conventions, treaties, armistices, and the United Nations notwithstanding.



## Chapter VI

# THE HUNDRED NATIONS OF THE USSR

**A**FFECTING BOTH the foreign and the internal policies of the Soviet Union is the complicated issue of the multitude of her nationalities, their relations with one another and with the non-Russian world. Something like two hundred languages are spoken in the Soviet Union. There are sixty ethnic groups with populations of more than twenty thousand each. Fifty-one nationalities have their own form of limited statehood. Of the large national minorities (those with populations of over a million each), there are seventeen today.

Only when some crisis involving Russia has arisen have the governments of other powers become suddenly aware that a number of large and small nationalities live under one Russian roof and constitute a problem still to be solved. Then the emergency passed and the question was again forgotten. The farther one moves away from Europe's east the less understanding does one find of the problem of Russia's many peoples. On the continent more is known of it than in England; in England more than in America.

In the U.S.A. the issue has been almost entirely overlooked, despite the propaganda some of America's ethnic groups have promoted on behalf of the lands of their origin. Americans read about the Ukrainian and Bielorussian delegates to the United Nations, about Uzbeks and Kalmyks, without realizing the significance of all these nations within a nation. As sentiment after the war began to turn against the Soviets, various "scientific" theories, or rather theories purporting to be based on various sciences, were advanced. We were told that because of some basic inferiority of her people—in either inheritance or education—Russia proper would continue to

breed aggression and reaction, while other nationalities of the Soviet Union, able to understand and adopt Western ideas, were capable of co-operation and progress.

Old Russia ignored the problem. The fact that the population of the south-western Caucasus was Armenian, for example, or that of a certain territory of the Baltic Sea Lithuanian had no weight in state affairs or legal recognition. The country was divided into a number of provinces, with frontiers which cut through national territories, so no provinces could be designated as Armenian or Lithuanian or Ukrainian. In the schools Russian and foreign languages were taught but not the native tongues of the non-Russian minorities. Newspapers, with few exceptions, had to be printed in Russian. The pretence was that Russia, like Germany, France, or the United States, was one nation, and that no racial distinctions were clear-cut enough to cause disharmony in internal affairs.

Austria-Hungary, the only other multinational empire at that time on the continent, fell apart in 1918. Russia had become the Soviet land; the civil war had started. Russia's national structure disintegrated, and centrifugal forces were set in motion; under every possible pretext the various nationalities started drives toward "independence" for their territories. Often purely Russian provinces as well as non-Russian areas set themselves up as "autonomous." Larger provinces proclaimed their separation from Russia and claimed Sovereignty, although separation had not been a part of their programme until the new dictatorial régime came to power in November 1917. Before the Soviet revolution only Finland and Poland had tried to separate themselves from Russia, for obvious reasons. Neither Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, nor the Ukraine, Moldavia, Georgia, Armenia, or Crimea had tried separation.

The emerging national governments of formerly Russian territories proceeded to issue their proclamations of independence. Each appointed a foreign minister to conduct negotiations with Russia, and soon made contact with foreign powers. The political leaders of the new states often stressed their intention of rejoining Russia as soon as she should be "free



from Bolshevik rule." In Georgia, for example, the leaders continued to affirm their adherence to Russia even after Lenin's seizure of power, and not until April 1918 did they proclaim the independence of their country. Sentiment in the Ukraine followed a similar pattern. There the Rada (National Council) did not declare the separation of the Ukraine from Russia until after the treaty of Brest-Litovsk had been signed, in March 1918. The leaders of the three Baltic states expected that Lenin's government would soon collapse. They made it clear that their aim was to save their nations from the deluge which was then engulfing Russia.

Of the states that emerged in 1917-20 only a few maintained their independence: Finland, Poland, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. The rest—the Ukraine, the Caucasus, central Asia—were retaken by Soviet forces and reincorporated into Russia. Since this process was directed by the Moscow government and carried out by its army, it had the appearance of a Russian nationalist drive against independent smaller nations. This interpretation, however, was a superficial one. Lenin's bolshevism was not yet imperialism, nor was it a specifically Russian ("Great Russian") product. Actually Lenin's party, a small minority among Russians themselves, had a number of members and sympathizers among the minorities, too; these non-Russian Bolsheviks, through political and conspiratorial work, prepared the way for the Red Army's advance into the Ukraine, Georgia, Kirghiz, and other lands. Their accomplishment was greater in many ways than that of the Communist fifth columns in our day. Today the Soviet army is a formidable force; thirty years ago it was a mass of poorly equipped, undisciplined, politically unreliable peasants, liable to disintegrate at any time. Such an army could not have stood up against effective, spirited resistance; but the resistance it met was even weaker than the Red onslaught.

The Soviet system of government in effect since the early 'twenties was a system of political oppression but not the oppression of national minorities. All the national groups shared a common lack of human and political rights. Even here there was a sort of equality. After the revolution there was

a good deal of political discontent among the national groups; this was directed, however, against communism and the central and local authorities, not against the "Russian occupation."

The Soviet government tried to solve the problem of its nationalities as it did all other basic political issues. There was a duality between the published constitution and the party's system of control. According to the written constitutions, far-reaching autonomy was granted to every nationality; the so-called union republics even have—theoretically—the right of secession from the Soviet Union. The constitutions are invalidated, however, by the centralized authority of the Communist party. Schools and universities are allegedly the primary field of autonomous activities, yet the school system, the textbooks, the order of classes and grades are uniform; they are prescribed by the party. The same is true of every other field of "autonomous" activity.

Actually the only privilege the nationalities have is the right to use their own languages in their schools, newspapers, theatres, and literature. In this respect the Soviet government went far; it tried to encourage among backward peoples the development of their national cultures, some of which had already begun to be submerged by those of the surrounding areas.

Today the rise of a new class of intellectuals in every national minority will make it nearly impossible for any Russian government, whatever its orientation, to revert to the ways of Old Russia in conducting relationships between nationalities. In the course of three decades the number of intellectuals has been increasing in the "national republics"—professors, academicians, public-school teachers, political leaders—most of them speaking, writing, and teaching in the native tongues of their nationalities. This was almost unknown in old Russia, where teaching and writing for publication had to be done in Russian.

Though data concerning this new intelligentsia among the minorities tend to be kept secret, it would appear from figures that have been published in the past and from some indirect indications in the Soviet press that non-Russian teachers and



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other educators number about 400,000. This represents a phenomenal increase, since while the number of Russian educators and writers has grown considerably during the Soviet period the non-Russians had to start almost from scratch. Of the 400,000 about 40 per cent are in the Ukraine; every other national group, however, down to the smallest, has its column in this intellectual army which is indirectly forwarding the cause of the various nationalities.

The Russian schoolteacher is not very well trained; his horizon is not broad. Modest, poorly paid, and often narrow-minded, the "pedagogue" has no political pull with the local bosses—the party secretaries, the editors, the police chiefs. These thousands of teachers, however, do stand out in the milieu in which they live as intellectuals, educated people who can kindle minds and spirits. Some of them rise high in scientific institutions, and then, if they choose to enter the party, have a chance to better their living conditions, to win fame—perhaps even a Stalin prize. In this respect the Georgian, the Karelian, and the Ukrainian teachers have had the same opportunity as the Russian. Before the war, at least, preference did not seem to be granted to Russian educators.

With these intellectual currents widening in the non-Russian provinces, no amount of emphasis on Russian genius and no claims, however large, to specific Russian nationalist achievements in the course of the war can diminish the contributions of the national minorities in the Soviet Union or obscure the fact that they are using their own language, maintaining their own schools, and publishing their own literature. Even the intense Russian nationalism that has come as a result of the Second World War cannot ignore the smaller nationalities or deprive them of the right they acquired in the revolution to a culture of their own. Russia has regarded herself as a multi-national state since 1917, and the idea has won such general acceptance that there can be no turning away from it.

## THE GERMAN SOLUTION OF THE PROBLEM

In both world wars Germany had a solution for the problem of Russian minorities; it was to separate Russia's western and

southern territories. Russian Poland, the Ukraine, and the Baltic nations chiefly drew the attention of Berlin and Vienna before 1914 and during the great European conflicts of this century. Lying between Russia proper ("Great Russia") and the two German monarchies, these areas logically aroused interest and covetousness. Polish émigré groups found support throughout the West; during the war of 1914-18, Austrian Poland (Galicia) served as a centre of activities for Polish anti-Russian parties; Ukrainian groups, oriented toward the Russian Ukraine, likewise found asylum there. When the First World War broke out it was Austria rather than Germany that harboured political groups with programmes advocating separation of Poland and the whole of the Ukraine from Russia; what Germany contributed to these plans was the desire to separate the Baltic nations and Finland.

The treaty of Brest-Litovsk marked the triumph of these plans. The two German powers designated a boundary line which left Poland, the Baltic states, and part of Bielorussia beyond the reach of the Soviet government, while the independence of the Ukraine was stipulated by a special treaty. It was not long before the whole Ukraine came under Germany's control and a puppet government was set up in Kiev. In the Baltic, too, Germany was the master.

Had Germany and Austria won the war, the two empires would obviously have embraced, as dependencies or as protectorates, the southern part of the former Russian Empire as well as the shores of the Baltic, except perhaps the area of Petrograd (Leningrad). With the addition of new territories to be annexed from Belgium and France and with a population of 175,000,000 to 200,000,000 the German imperial bloc might have grown into the impregnable fortress which was the dream of its leaders.

In the 1930's Germany resumed her offensive while Austria was no longer a power; what remained of her territory was absorbed by Germany in 1938. Germany took over, too, Hapsburg Austria's imperial policies and plans for the east and south-east. The Berlin government, the only standard-bearer of German expansionism, directed its attention



anew toward the Ukraine, Bielorussia, and the Baltic states.

Dismemberment of Russia was advocated again. The simple idea behind this plan was that Germany's control over the east would be firm only if separate states—as many of them as possible—succeeded a unified Russia; and that, to this end, the Reich should capitalize to the fullest extent upon existing national divergencies. Cautiously before 1939 and openly after June 1941 Hitler's Germany supported anti-Russian national movements and created them artificially when necessary. In Bielorussia, for instance, where there was practically no national trend towards separation from Russia, the idea of secession was magnified, fostered, and encouraged by the Nazis. National independence was promised to Kalmyks, Tatars, Georgians. Even the Cossacks—actually a part of the Russian people and speaking pure Russian—were proclaimed a separate nation. In the vast territory occupied by the Germans during the past war there lived a number of non-Russian nationalities; each of these was promised "liberation," which always meant two things: German "protection" and an end to Communist rule. Hundreds, even thousands, of members of these nations accepted posts under the German occupation, engaged in political activity, and built up a press and parties, both nationalist and pro-German. Not necessarily pro-Nazi, some of these groups strove toward a democratic system of national government. It is doubtful, however, whether these nationalist tendencies reflected popular aspirations inside the Soviet Union. Most of them flourished only in the climate of Rosenberg's hothouses, and some were even conceived under the German occupation.

The attitude of France and England to Russia's minority problems differed essentially from that of Germany, while the United States had no consistent policy in this respect until very recently.

For eighty years now France's security has hinged on the containment of Germany, and the Franco-Russian alliance was the French solution of the problem. France needed a strong Russia on Germany's eastern borders; since a secession

of Russia's national minorities was bound not only to weaken her but also to place new small nations between Russia and Germany, France was on the whole cool toward the plans for Russia's dismemberment. For a time, after 1918, she tried to co-operate with re-emerging Poland as an ersatz for the great Russian Empire; as soon, however, as the danger arising from Hitler became acute, France reverted to the old concept and entered into a new alliance with Russia which remained in force from 1935 to 1938-39.

Britain has been more favourably inclined than France to the projects for a dissolution of Russia's national organism; in a way Russia had been a "hereditary enemy" of Britain. In 1917-20 London was happy to observe and assist in the detachment of great areas of central Asia whose annexation to Russia had been carried out in sharp antagonism to London. Britain was ready to sponsor the independence of several new states in the Caucasus situated near her spheres of influence. The great sea power was glad to observe the emergence of three independent nations on the Baltic sea. This was all in conformity with Britain's traditional course of supporting small nations in Europe against British rivals and foes, the continental great powers.

But in the 1930's Britain began to waver in her consistent anti-Russian and anti-Soviet trends, the reason being that which had moved her to a *rapprochement* with Russia in 1907 and had led France toward a new alliance with Russia in 1935: the growing German menace. Despite acute antagonism toward Moscow, London realized in the 1930's that a substantial weakening of Russia's force at that moment might facilitate a German conquest of the continent. While Hitler's government was adopting the programme for Russia's dismemberment, Britain was gradually becoming averse to it.

These fluctuations in the French and British attitudes are significant and indicative for the future.

The foreign policy of the United States suffered greatly, especially during the recent war, from its lack of long-range views and perspective and consequently from its inability to



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foresee developments on the international scene. The first precept for any student of world affairs is to look beyond current events and problems, to remember that there will be a tomorrow quite different from today.

Tomorrow's Europe will be a continent in which Germany, with its population of 50,000,000 in the Western state and 70,000,000 in the whole nation, will play an outstanding rôle. Not only will her economy be rehabilitated but her statehood also; there is no way to prevent this development, even if we wanted to. It can only be slowed down or accelerated, and the Soviet offensive makes it necessary to accelerate the resurgence of Germany's force as an element of the united Western front. So long as the issue of Russia remains the world's outstanding problem, the implications of Germany's rearmament, although generally realized, must remain in the background. As soon, however, as the severe tensions of our times cease and as the Soviet problem is, even if only for a time, resolved one way or another, the economic and political potential of Germany will re-emerge as the paramount problem for Europe and the world. At such a moment dismemberment of Russia would be a new great mistake.

Separation of nationality groups from Russia would mean the creation of a belt of new independent states out of the present northern, western, and southern territories of the Soviet Union. There would be Finno-Karelia in the north, Bielorussia in the west, and the Ukraine (and Moldavia) in the south, with their population of some 60,000,000. There would also be Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan in the Caucasus, with an aggregate population of 17,000,000. In short, this would mean that the Soviet population, at present about 200,000,000, would decrease to between 100,000,000 and 110,000,000. With her European boundary pushed far to the east, Russia would lose, besides man power, the economic prerequisites of influence—the coal mines and iron resources of the Don Basin, the oil of Baku, the wheat of the Ukraine, the manganese of the Caucasus, and half her industry in general.

In recent years we have seen what the creation of a political

vacuum means in a continent which has been ruled by power politics. Germany will be in the best position to reach out again for territorial gains and create a great German "sphere" in the east. Face to face with Germany, the new states will never be able to maintain independence, and after a short time Germany will re-emerge as Europe's only great power—with all the implications of such a state of affairs.

This is why the Western world cannot disregard Russia as a force of the future. It needs Russia, within her pre-war boundaries, as a potential ally, a deterrent, a balance in the great-power scale. To "Balkanize" Russia, break her up into a number of sovereign nations, would be shortsighted.

The "balance of power" policy has often been decried and allegedly rejected within the last decades. Yet during the century from 1815 to 1914, one of the most peaceful in the history of mankind, peace in Europe was maintained through balances and counter-balances of power. During the second half of the century, with the rise of Prussia-Germany, the French-Russian alliance overbalanced the dynamic German combination when the French Republic, despite all its ideological differences with the tsarist empire, gave financial support to Russia's war potential. This delayed war until 1914. After the Russian revolution France tried again to enlist Russian co-operation in the 'thirties, but with no real success. England, which had favoured Russia's dismemberment in 1918-20, when Germany was weak, ceased to play with the idea of "separatism" of Russia's various nationalities as soon as Hitler came to power and began reviving German armed strength.

It may seem fantastic at first glance that we first fight a bitter war to destroy Germany's military power; then observing Soviet expansion and the rise of Soviet power, help to resurrect Germany and give her economic and other means to resist and counter-balance Soviet pressure; and then, realizing the dangers involved in Germany's growth, want to keep intact a great Russian state with its military force. Is this not a senseless contradiction?

It is no madder than our whole international set-up; it is



insane in the same sense as the present system of seventy sovereign states, free to arm, attack, conquer, and enslave. So long as there is no world authority over these states—and no real start can be made before the Soviet problem is solved—each of them may continue erratically, doing today the opposite of what it did yesterday and destroying tomorrow what it achieved today.

### A VARIETY OF NATIONAL PROBLEMS

In the United States the problem of minority groups is moving toward a solution through their gradual absorption into the English-speaking community. This is barred as far as Russia's large minorities are concerned. Even the seventeen comparatively large national groups in Russia today are each a distinct problem and it would be a mistake to try to find a universal pattern for the solution of all of them.

Of the sixteen recognized larger "minorities" (the "union republics") five were formally added to the Soviet Union in 1940. (The three Baltic nations, as well as Karelia and Moldavia which were formerly small "autonomous" provinces, became major "republics.") Neither the Soviet people nor the Baltic nations desired annexation or thought it necessary; Soviet citizens, even officers of the Soviet army, have remained either critical or violently opposed to this act of forced annexation. Two decades of sovereignty have left their mark, and today the only possible solution of this problem is restoration of Baltic independence.

A different situation obtains in regard to the four main nationalities of central Asia—the Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Tadzhiks, and Kirghiz. To them Russia is the "West," civilized and civilizing, rich and efficient. Russian medicine, hospitals, schools, universities, railroads, and automobiles are proof of Russia's superiority and of her ability to develop backward areas; tsarist Russia and then the Soviet Union have done much to civilize this part of the world. On the other hand, Soviet methods of collectivist economy have nourished profound discontent here and Soviet police methods have provoked bloody uprisings. If the rights and privileges promised

by the constitution could become reality, the prevalent majority of this great region would certainly be satisfied with national autonomy within the framework of a federated state.

The major problem is that of the Ukraine and, to a less degree, of some of the Caucasian nationalities. The Ukraine and the three Caucasian nations (Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan) proclaimed their independence in 1918 and maintained separate statehood for two or three years; later their governments-in-exile were recognized by the powers; their spokesmen abroad were tireless, and a number of press organs in the West propagandized for a programme to restore their sovereignty.

Inside the Soviet Union, however, great changes occurred during the two decades before 1941. Abatement of antagonisms which flared up in 1917-20 between the various nationalities was one of the most important developments. Whatever other conflicts arose, clashes among nationalities were rare. The Russians and the various minorities lived together with almost no dissensions arising out of racial, national, or religious differences.

The fact is that in Russia, even before the revolution, racial animosities never ran high and militant conflicts rarely burst out. There were no spontaneous killings or riots; even anti-Jewish pogroms occurred only when instigated or approved by the authorities in advance. In the Ukraine, in particular, racial relations between Russians and Ukrainians were remarkably amicable, considering that the population of the large cities is more than 50 per cent non-Ukrainian. The common language in the cities is Russian; in many rural districts Russian farmers mingle peacefully with the Ukrainians. It was not until the civil war, when the fabric of old Russia was being torn asunder, when all the neglected evils and all the hidden corruption came to light, that national antagonisms flared up briefly.

During the years that followed, hatreds gradually subsided. Russian engineers and workers were dispatched *en masse* to areas of the "national republics," where they settled down and



lived peacefully with the local populations. Students from Georgia and Armenia went to the universities of Moscow and other Russian cities to study and mingled with Russians and non-Russians; no racial distinctions were made.

The mixing of nationalities was furthered by the government's policy toward a number of minorities which often approached the pattern of genocide. During the war it uprooted and deported entire nationalities (Kalmyks, Chechens, Ingush, Tatars, Karachaians, and others); it continued the deportations, especially from Lithuania and Latvia, after the war. As for the Ukrainians, millions of them were dispersed to the east and north in the "liquidation of kulaks" and during the war.<sup>1</sup> The net result is, however, that the population of the Soviet Union is more mixed today than it ever was before. While the migration of private citizens is made difficult, large blocks of human beings are thrown here and there. Cities arising in the deserts of Asia are populated with involuntary immigrants from every "national republic"; railroads and canals are built with imported man power. During the 1930's over 18,000,000 men and women moved from the country into cities, often crossing national borders; this great migration is comparable to the wartime population movements in 1941-42. Today there is hardly an area in Russia where the population is linguistically or racially uniform. In particular, the number of Ukrainians in the Soviet Union decreased 10 per cent between the two Soviet censuses (1926 and 1939), while the general population increased 16 per cent. "The decrease . . . was probably due, in the main," Professor Frank Lorimer remarks, "to increasing identification with the Russians, especially in the case of Ukrainians living in the R.S.F.S.R."<sup>2</sup>

Absence of information from and about the national areas of the Soviet Union has tended to obscure and complicate the

<sup>1</sup> A bitter joke about the Ukrainians is whispered in Russia. (It could be applied to other Soviet nationalities as well.) "What's the biggest country in the world?" "The Ukraine." "How come?" "Her borders are on the Black Sea, her bosses live in Moscow, and the population is in Siberia."

<sup>2</sup> Frank Lorimer, *The Population of the Soviet Union* (Geneva, League of Nations, 1946), p. 139.

issue. In his otherwise excellent book, *The Coming Defeat of Communism*, James Burnham considers, for instance, "liberation" of the Ukraine from Russia as a great goal equal in importance with liberation of millions of slaves from "labour camps"; if war comes both will be included, he is sure, among the war aims of the United States, "from expediency as well as from moral-ideological motives." In the recent war, he says, the Germans were able to enlist a large Ukrainian army under General Vlasov, and even today there exists a Ukrainian resistance ("the Ukrainian Insurgent Army").<sup>1</sup> In this concept the purely Russian (Great Russian) government in Moscow at the head of its Red Army has during and since the war been fighting the people of the Ukraine and its army. In this picture the Ukraine's position is similar to that of Poland or Czechoslovakia in Hitler's Reich.

The truth of the matter is that General Vlasov was a Russian, and the overwhelming majority of his aides and followers were Russians; this historically significant movement<sup>2</sup> which also embraced elements of other nations of the Soviet Union was actually in its composition a replica of Russia herself. As a matter of fact, in the early stages of the war, "disloyalty" to the Kremlin existed in various areas of the Soviet Union, no matter what the nationality of their inhabitants. As to the Insurgent Army, its present existence is doubted even by its former leaders and adherents.<sup>3</sup>

The Ukraine, a distinct national unit in the complex structure of Russia, cannot be compared, however, either with Poland under Germany, or with Indo-China or even Algeria under France, or with India, until recently in the framework of the British Empire. All these analogies are faulty. India ardently strove to achieve independent statehood and the same is true of many other colonies. Of the nations of Russia, however, it is likely that only the three Baltic countries genuinely want and expect immediate separation from Russia;

<sup>1</sup> James Burnham, *The Coming Defeat of Communism* (New York, John Day Company, 1949), pp. 118, 161.

<sup>2</sup> Pp. 67-70 of this book.

<sup>3</sup> For instance, Peter Yarovy in *Russia of Tomorrow* (New York), September 9, 1950.



to them freedom is identical with complete independence.

There is a world of difference between the far-flung national structure of Russia and Britain. England was England, and India was India; oceans lay between them, contact between their citizens was scant and controlled. There were the pound sterling and the rupee; and the English language was used in India only in the cities. Inter-marriage was rare, and the British did not educate their citizens in Indian schools. In Russia no real frontiers exist or have ever existed between the "union republics" or "autonomous" areas; visas are unnecessary; in travelling only the station signboards remind one of passing from one "state" into another, and there is no consciousness of "mixing" with the local population in the cities. The rouble is the sole monetary unit; Russian is spoken everywhere. Merging of peoples, particularly in the European part of the Soviet Union, has reached a degree unknown in Britain's non-English possessions.

There is one multinational state in Europe which has preserved its structure throughout centuries, a state which can proudly claim to have achieved normal, peaceful relations between its three nationalities. This state is Switzerland. True, it is a small state and has not known the troubles and ordeals of the great powers; true also, it is protected by its geographical position. Yet Switzerland stands out as a major achievement in the long history of relations between national groups and offers larger nations some lessons in how to solve one of their most vexing problems.

In Switzerland Germans constitute 70 per cent of the total population, French 20 per cent, and Italians 7 per cent. In the 1930's, when German nationalism was at its peak all over the world, when the German nationals rebelled in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Rumania and were on the verge of "action" in the United States, Swiss Germans stood aloof. When Hitler knocked, the gates of the Sudetenland, the Corridor, and Austria opened wide. But he knocked in vain at the gates of Switzerland; not even a would-be Quisling answered. History has proved the bonds between Germans and French within Switzerland to be stronger than those between

Swiss Germans and Germans in Germany. The multinational state of Switzerland has passed the test.

It would be absurd to try to apply the experience of little Switzerland to vast Russia. Yet some essentials of the Swiss way of life can and must be applied elsewhere: the equal status of her nationalities and their languages, with local (cantonal) governments controlling a large area of state affairs; a federal government whose policies never show preference toward any one of the three nationalities. Two extremes are unthinkable for Russia: the American pattern of a melting pot and amalgamating all racial groups into one nationality, and the Austrian pattern of universal partition and separation. Any comprehensive plan should provide for considerable privileges mutually accorded; the trend must be toward a free federation of nations.

The world should have more than one type of democracy, and by its deeds each nation will write its own essay on liberty. Britain tried to achieve her ideal of freedom by entrusting all power to her parliament, while retaining the crown and controlling a far-flung empire by a variety of means. France has experimented with a centralized republic having a powerless president but considerable military strength. The United States gave its president power but tried to do without compulsory military service. Amid this diversity of experience and achievements, of success in some cases and failure in others, the task of multinational Russia will be one of a scope and magnitude unknown to other nations. There will be a great deal of experimenting in Russia, too. Uniform methods applying to all nationalities are not possible; each will present separate problems. The inevitable process of adjustment will take decades until the reforms and innovations simmer down into a definite system satisfactory to all concerned.



## Chapter VII

# NATIONALISM OLD AND NEW

**W**E REMEMBER how the non-Soviet world reacted when for the first time Stalin began to refer to the tsarist Generals Suvorov and Kutuzov and the glory of old Russia. People abroad said, as did Russians in Moscow and at the front: Propaganda! Ideological trick! Let them win the war, and these echoes of old Russia will be forgotten in favour of Marxism-Leninism-Stalinism.

In essence this scepticism was correct. Yet something of the new attitude remained in Russia after the war, for Stalin had not simply been putting on a masquerade. The racial labels of "good" nations and "bad" nations and the notion of the superiority of some peoples over others were taking hold. They did not dislodge the old Communist tenets and teachings but rather mixed with them, forming a curious ideology of the messianism of the Russian people: Russia is entitled to *privileges*—territorial, political, economic—which must be withheld from other member nations of the Soviet Union as well as from the non-Soviet world.

Before the revolution the idea that Russia was a backward nation was an undisputed truth to Lenin, as it was in the minds of all intelligent Russians irrespective of party affiliation. Lenin, however, along with his teachers and friends, expounded this concept as a universal sociological and political philosophy. The "advanced nations," synonymous with "capitalist nations," were to him (as they were to most other socialists) ripening rapidly into the new social order. Russia, however, was not among them. The "capitalist stage" was considered a prerequisite to this new order, since industry and an industrial working class cannot successfully develop under "pre-capitalist" ("feudal-autocratic") conditions.

Lenin fought hard and passionately against Russian "populists" who viewed the peasantry as the potential builders of socialism in Russia and who hoped backward Russia might reach socialism without travelling the long and painful road of capitalism. Even after the outbreak of the revolution of 1917 Lenin stressed his disbelief in a rapid socialist transformation of Russia and—always coupled with it—his high regard for the Western, the advanced nations.

The idea [wrote Lenin] is absolutely alien to us that the Russian working class is a chosen revolutionary proletariat among the workers of the world. We know very well that the proletariat of Russia is less organized, less prepared, and less conscious than workers in other countries. It was not the special virtues of the Russian proletarians but historical circumstances that made them, perhaps for a very short time, the trouble shooters for the revolutionary proletarians of the world.

Russia is a peasants' country, one of the most backward countries of Europe. Socialism cannot win there immediately and directly.<sup>1</sup>

Trotsky, on the other hand, tried to square the circle in his own way. The imminent revolution in backward Russia, he expected, would kindle the flame of a series of revolutions in the advanced nations of the West; the victory of these revolutions would mean socialist reconstruction of the greater part of world economy; Russia would then, with the assistance of advanced Western socialism, be in a position to rebuild and strengthen the Western, meaning socialist, character of her economy. This was Trotsky's concept of a "permanent revolution."

It was Stalin who pictured the Russian revolution as a *direct* transition to socialism. In this he differed from both Lenin and Trotsky. In August 1917, only a few months after the above statement was made by Lenin, Stalin told a party conference:

Some comrades have argued that, because capitalism is poorly developed in our country, it is utopian to pose the

<sup>1</sup> Lenin, *Collected Works* (4th Russian ed.), p. 361.



question of the socialist revolution . . . But it would be unworthy pedantry to demand that Russia postpone her socialist transformation until Europe starts. That country starts which has better chances.

It is not impossible that Russia will be the first country to open the road to socialism. No other country has enjoyed as much freedom in wartime as Russia, or has tried to establish the workers' control of production.

We must reject the obsolete notion that only Europe can pave this road for us. There exists a dogmatic and a creative Marxism. The latter is my basis.<sup>1</sup>

To the Communist world the crux of the problems was this: if Russia cannot make the jump to the new social order, she is backward, she must learn from the West, she must follow established patterns; looking up to the advanced peoples, she herself must be modest. If, however, a rapid transition is possible, then Russia is the great builder of socialism; she will serve as a pattern to other nations; she has no reason to be modest; on the contrary, she will lead the world.

Stalin cut the navel cord between the Russian socialist infant and the mother West. Not by following others, he said, but alone and by her own efforts will the Russian nation transform her social structure. This was his concept of "socialism in one country." When Stalin began to translate these words into deeds Lenin was dead and Trotsky had been ostracized. This was all to the good; now the "building of a classless society" and its "ideological superstructure" could proceed in isolated Russia.

A new nationalist pride was considered legitimate, and the new feeling was nurtured by every possible means.

The following decade completed the social upheaval; capitalism was "uprooted," and private property abolished in industry, trade, and the vast field of peasant agriculture. Now Stalin claimed that the people, formerly divided into antagonistic classes, formed a classless society; national unity, he said, was established for the first time in Russian history. The press gradually ceased to apply terms of class struggle to

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Stalin, *Works* (Russian ed.), III, 187.

Russia; the harmonious-sounding phrase "toiling people" supplanted the previous terms "workers" and "peasants." Today "class struggle" is scarcely ever used; even the word "class" is rarely to be found in literature and public speeches. The whole nation is viewed as a uniform and consolidated mass.

As class distinctions were, according to official ideology, withering away, distinctions of nationality came more and more to the fore. Formerly, workers were good, kulaks bad, capitalists worst. Now there were nations—good, bad, and very bad. Germans of the Volga-German territory were deported wholesale to the east and north. Later five other "disloyal" nationalities (Tatars, Chechens, Ingush, Kalmyks, Karachaians) had to share the same fate. In the 'twenties and even in the early 'thirties Soviet authorities used to make a distinction, if only for reasons of propaganda and ideology, between "industrial workers" and "bourgeois and kulaks"; the first were considered sound and reliable, the second were punished. Wherever at that time a punitive operation was to be carried out, the "landlords, capitalists, and kulaks" were to be deported and the poor peasants and workers spared—at least according to the propaganda. Now such discriminations were no longer made.

The Russian, on the other hand, was the incarnation of all virtues, the demiurge of communism. Stalin announced this new philosophy most distinctly when he spoke to his generals after the war at a gathering celebrating the victory. Breaking with old tradition, he attributed all the virtues to the *Russian* as distinct from the rest of the Soviet people. He raised his glass "to the health of our Soviet people and, first of all, of the Russian people." (Here the record notes "stormy, prolonged applause, shouts of 'Hurrah!'"<sup>1</sup>)

I drink [he said] first of all to the health of the Russian people because they are the most important nation of all nations forming the Soviet Union.

I raise a toast to the health of the Russian people because . . . they are the leading force in the Soviet Union among all

<sup>1</sup> *Information Bulletin of the Soviet Embassy in Washington* (1945), No. 55.



the peoples of our country . . . They possess clear minds, staunch character, and patience.

The confidence of the Russian people in the Soviet government proved to be the decisive force which insured a historic victory over the enemy of humanity—fascism.

The reference to the “leading” rôle of the Russian people among the other peoples of the Soviet Union was something new. It was a resurrection of the pre-revolutionary concept of Russian leadership over the nations inhabiting Russia; it was the opposite of Lenin’s advice to remain humble and wise and never to claim superiority over other nationalities. What Stalin stressed was the embryo of a new racial theory, with the Russians—who are only half of the Soviet population—constituting the superior race.

Three months later Stalin again seized the opportunity to emphasize his return to pre-revolutionary tenets. On V-J Day he recalled Russia’s defeat in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5—a defeat which had been hailed by the defeatist-minded party of Lenin. Now Stalin described it differently. The defeat, he said, “left grave memories in the minds of our peoples; it was a dark stain on our country . . . For forty years have we, men of the older generation, waited for this day. And now this day has come.”

The new Soviet anthem introduced in December 1943 is now sung along with the traditional “Internationale.” For the first time, after an interval of twenty-six years, the national anthem again contains the word “Russia”; and even more significant, the “Russian people” are hailed as superior to the other nations of the Soviet land, and their leader as the great state and empire builder.

The anthem—its every word of course weighed, checked, and analyzed before publication—starts thus: “Great Russia has forever consolidated the inviolable union of free republics.” Old and new terms were artfully combined. The concept of “free republics”—meaning national republics—was taken over from the Soviet set-up; but the name “Great Russia” was new in a Soviet song. Before the revolution “Great Russia” and “Great Russians” were used in the same sense

that "Russia" and "Russians" are today, to differentiate between them and the Ukrainians (Little Russians) and Bielorusians (White Russians). The creation of the Soviet nation and the leadership of it were now attributed to the "Great Russians."<sup>1</sup>

A campaign was launched by the party's Central Committee to extol and enhance the achievements of the Russian people. Developing in a vacuum, with no critics or opponents, the drive soon reached preposterous proportions. All kinds of inventions and discoveries hitherto recognized as having been made by Westerners were claimed to have been made by Russians, and hardly a Soviet non-Russian was listed as the true inventor and discoverer. Georgians, Poles, Ukrainians, Jews were rarely cited, but instead only Russian names, such as Chernov (steel), Lodygin (electric bulb), Popov (radio-telegraph), Dolivo-Dobrovolsky and Petrov (electrical engineering), Cherepanov (locomotives), Polzunov (thermo-technics), Yablochkov, Lomonosov.

Study of the Russian language was ordered in all satellite countries of the west and east. In Mongolia the Russian alphabet replaced the native characters. Russian peasants were brought in to settle along new frontiers in the west, for example in Lithuania, while the native population was deported in large numbers.

A work entitled *The Great Russian People* was recently published by the highly official *Gosizdat* (State Publishing House); its author is Miss A. Pankratova, a prolific writer of books to order. It enumerates the merits and achievements of the Russians as distinct from other member nations of the Soviet Union. Nothing sensational is presented in the 190 pages of this work, which discusses industrialization, collectivization, the five-year plans, aid to other national areas, the war against Germany—but now credit for everything is given to the Russians. The very fact that such a book was commissioned by the State Publishing House in 1948 and printed in an

<sup>1</sup> This essential and, in a way, sensational character of the new anthem was overlooked in the U.S.A. because the translation made in Moscow by American correspondents of the United Press was inexact; the translator obviously did not realize what he was eliminating.



edition of 100,000 is symptomatic of the new situation.

It was significant that the northern area of East Prussia, annexed to the Soviet Union after the war, was added to the Russian Republic. All the sixteen union republics occupy continuous territory; but East Prussia borders on Lithuania, and the Russian republic lies three hundred miles away. It would have been logical to constitute the new area either an autonomous German soviet republic or, if the memories of war were too fresh, to add it temporarily to Soviet Lithuania. Annexing it directly to the RSFSR is like making the state of Maine part of the state of Virginia. Absurd as it may appear, this measure, too, is symptomatic of the new Great Russia trend.

## LENIN AGAINST STALIN ON THE NATIONAL ISSUE

During the last two years before his death Lenin lashed out more than once against those among his immediate entourage whom he termed "Great Russian chauvinists." "Scratch a Communist," he wrote in December 1922, "and you will find a Great Russian chauvinist."

Lenin remembered pre-revolutionary conditions in Russia; he urged that serious attention be given to the sensibilities of the minorities. "Caution is necessary," he said, "on the part of a nation like the Great Russians, which had provoked the bitter hatred of the other nationalities toward itself"; yet "the Great Russian chauvinist dwells in many of us and we have to fight him."<sup>1</sup>

Of course Lenin had no scruples about an attack upon independent Georgia, Ukraine, or Poland, if ruled by non-Communists; in this respect he was a true "Leninist." As soon, however, as small nations become incorporated into the Soviet state and their governments become Communist, the Russian majority, he felt, should proceed with prudence.

He attacked Stalin, Dzerzhinsky, and Ordzhonikidze because of their behaviour toward Caucasian Communists. In his anger he called them "true-Russian *derzhimordas*" (derz-

<sup>1</sup> See Lenin, *Collected Works* (3rd Russian ed.), XXIV, 155; *Socialist Courier* (Berlin), December 1929, for this and following quotations.

himorda, in Gogol's *Revisor*, is the type of a brutal and stupid policeman). Of course, he said, these three Communist leaders are non-Russians themselves, but "a Russified non-Russian always shoots beyond the mark in his true-Russian moods."

"Stalin's hastiness," Lenin wrote, "his passion to command, as well as his anger against the notorious 'social-chauvinism,' have played an ominous rôle." Pointing at Stalin, Lenin wrote: "A Georgian who accuses others of social chauvinism (while he himself is not only a real social chauvinist but also a brutal derzhimorda) actually violates the interests of proletarian class solidarity." What Lenin feared most was a situation in which "we would appear to assume a kind of imperialist attitude toward oppressed nationalities."

A dual nationalism has been on the upsurge in recent years: in international affairs the Soviet Union as a whole, as one multinational unit, has made forward strides, acquired lands and spheres, pressed claims. In home affairs the Russian element of the Union has been pushed forward and eulogized. In both its phases—the imperialist and the national—the new trend denotes a far-reaching reversion into pre-1917 Russian concepts. Unbelievable as it may appear, old Russia in 1947-49 was criticized for her lack of nationalism! "For many decades," said *Pravda* in August 1947, "the ruling classes of tsarist Russia tried to imbue the Russian intelligentsia with a notion of cultural and spiritual imperfection. It was the Bolshevik party that first determined and evaluated the great global significance of Russian science and culture." A week later *Pravda* noted that the Soviet revolution of 1917 meant "salvation for the *national* interests of our country."

And then came a flood of speeches and articles about the lack of national pride among "certain groups" of Soviet intellectuals, about the criminal "genuflexion before the West"; about the superiority of Russian-Soviet civilization to any other brand in the world. Finally, in 1949, the noisy campaign against the "cosmopolites" was launched. The term "cosmopolite" had a double meaning: a cosmopolite is prepared to compromise with the non-Soviet world and



sacrifice Soviet interests; and he is a rootless creature, an a-national citizen of the country, a man without a national face. Almost all the culprits named in the course of the drive against "cosmopolites" were Jews.

Internationalism, the old Communist principle, was not thrown overboard, however. It too entered into the new ideological amalgam of recent Stalinism. Since Russia is the builder of communism, the bearer of the great torch, the incarnation of every virtue, serving Russian interests is the best brand of internationalism. *Salus Russiae suprema lex*: Russia's well-being is the supreme law for each and every nation, group, and individual. When other nations or Communist parties or individuals abroad are confronted with the dilemma whether or not to sacrifice certain interests of their nations to those of the Soviet Union, Moscow tells them to make the sacrifice. According to the new concept of internationalism this dilemma does not exist for the Soviet Union: the Soviet Union will not be called upon to sacrifice. The Soviet Union must acquire, gain, profit, vanquish.

At this point principles and theories come to an end. What is taboo for another nation is permitted the Soviet. Annexation of foreign territory, once furiously attacked by Lenin and Stalin, now in the case of the Soviet Union denotes progress. "Spheres of interest," vociferously decried before, now are desirable if they serve the purposes of the Soviet régime. Reparations payments, "contributions," economic draining of other countries—capitalist or Communist—are positive phenomena since they serve to enhance the power and prestige of the Communist fatherland.

A revolutionary [Stalin said] is a man who, without any reservation, *unconditionally, frankly, and honestly*, with *no* secret military *consultations*, is prepared to defend and fight for the USSR, because the USSR is the first proletarian revolutionary state to build socialism.

An internationalist is he who, without reservation, with no vacillation, with *no conditions*, is prepared to defend the USSR . . . He who intends to defend the revolutionary movement in the world apart from and against the USSR

## THE NEW SOVIET EMPIRE

acts against the revolution. He inevitably falls into the camp of the enemies of the revolution.<sup>1</sup>

The one phase of these developments has been generally noticed, the other has remained obscure. All the attention has been focused on the global aspect of the new trends in Soviet theories and policies and none on their impact on internal affairs. As a matter of fact, in the foreign policy aspect grand-scale Communist nationalism has ripened quickly and borne fruit, and has become the most ominous issue of our day. In the relations between Russia's various nations the process has been slower, quieter, and unpublicized. This flower has not yet reached full bloom, some of its petals are still closed.

The road, however, is open and the direction obvious.

## THE JEWISH QUESTION

The Jewish question in Russia during and after the war has been in a class by itself.

Careful observers of recent history have pondered why so few of the one and a half to two million Jews who lived in western and southern Russia were evacuated, while the rest remained despite the Nazis' reputation and were 90 per cent of them massacred. Some have attributed this strange fact to the difficulty of mass transportation in the Soviet Union, to the government order forbidding anyone to leave his work, or to the restraining influence of the Soviet police. In essence, however, these speculations explain nothing. If a million people had tried to flee from imminent death, in mass graves and Hitler's crematoria, even the NKVD would have been powerless to halt them. However, no one has heard anything about masses of fleeing Jews or their encounters with the NKVD. Only a small minority fled; the vast majority remained at home, many of them voluntarily.

It seems a horrible paradox—that they remained voluntarily! What was their state of mind? For their state of mind reflected as in a mirror the degree of political information

<sup>1</sup> Stalin, *Works*, X, 51.



throughout the nation, as well as the feeling toward the government.

Before the war Soviet literature and the Soviet press analyzed and studied Hitler's party extensively and in great detail. Innumerable quotations were printed from German speeches, books, and articles. The Soviet reader knew about Streicher and Rosenberg and all the other heroes of nazism. But there was something odd about this information which he was receiving and trying to digest critically: it was either turned on in a stream or suddenly stopped. At times the Soviet radio and Soviet orators damned the German leaders from morning till night as devils incarnate; at other times they were silent for months.

Today on the basis of new information we know what caused these interruptions. We know, for instance, that in October 1938 Moscow and Berlin concluded an agreement to halt their hostile propaganda;<sup>1</sup> that Germany broke this pledge later and the war of words flared up again; that in August 1939 the Moscow-Berlin pact was signed, remaining in force until Germany attacked Russia. During this latter period all criticism of Germany was stopped.

It is only in this light that we begin to see more clearly what has been pointed out by Soviet émigrés, both Jews and non-Jews; people found it impossible to orient themselves among these zigzags of propaganda and counter-propaganda.

It must be remembered, too, that the Soviet citizen, with sound good sense, is inclined to regard all official communications with some mistrust. Thus when the Soviet authorities

<sup>1</sup> The facts connected with this important and interesting agreement are not yet widely known. The circumstances, according to Gustav Hilger, Counsellor of the German Embassy in Moscow up to 1941, are as follows:

From 1934 to 1938 the animosity of press and radio attacks between Moscow and Berlin mounted; the Germans were more responsible for the sharpness of tone than the Russians. More than once this state of affairs was the subject of discussions in Berlin between the Foreign Office and the Soviet Embassy and of similar discussions in Moscow; in these talks it was suggested that at least the personalities of the two leaders should be left out of the propaganda war. In October 1938 the two governments began to seek ways of decreasing the tension between them; as the result of a conversation between Maxim Litvinov and Graf Schulenburg, the German ambassador, the tone of the press in both countries lost much of its bitterness. This was the first step on the road that eventually led to the Molotov-Ribbentrop agreement of August 1939.

reported that the German government and its leaders planned to castrate the Jews and to exterminate them in the event of war, Soviet readers regarded this as official propaganda, for some reason expedient for the government at the moment—just some more behind-the-scenes manipulation and manoeuvre, deserving no credence.

When the war broke out in 1941 many Jews in Russia still remembered the German occupation of 1914-17. "Of course," they said, "it was not pleasant. Sometimes the Germans maltreated people, shaved off beards, raped girls, shot innocent men for espionage. But those were isolated cases, and the great majority of the Jews managed to survive both the war and the occupation." Even the sceptics concluded, "What has been will be again. We'll manage this time too . . ."

After the war broke out the Moscow government received ample information from the cities which were the first to fall into German hands, through refugees, agents, spies, and through neutral powers. If it had told the Russian people and the world in full detail what it learned about the extermination of the Jews, if it had drawn its own practical conclusions and launched a mass evacuation of the Jewish population, the latter would almost all have been saved. But the government kept quiet, to protect what it considered its "national interests." It felt that there were greater advantages in concealing the fact that the fury of the Germans was directed mainly against the Jews; if this silence led hundreds of thousands of Jews to remain heedlessly at home, only to perish at the hands of the Germans, that was the price the Soviet régime had to pay for its safety.

During that early period of the war there was much discontent and defeatism among the people of every nationality, resulting from all that had gone before; many people hoped for an early collapse of the Soviet government because better times might follow. They recalled the collectivization campaigns, the beatings in GPU prisons, the concentration camps, the lawlessness; all the grievances, the bitter poverty, and the hunger they had endured. In the disheartened and retreating



army, imbued with the same mood as the rest of the population, discipline declined sharply and desertions began to assume mass proportions despite the sternest punishments. Whole armies surrendered to the enemy. The government tried to combat these moods by stories of the inhuman suffering inflicted by the Germans on the people of occupied territories. German atrocities—both real (there were all too many of those) and invented—became an integral part of Soviet propaganda. There was an all-out effort to kindle in every soul the flame of a popular war, of a national cause led by Stalin's government.

The fury of the German occupation was directed primarily against the Jews and against members of the Communist party. But the Soviet radio and press chose to say nothing of this. They sought to create the impression that the Germans were out to exterminate everyone alike. And so, while Berlin was maintaining a strict silence about its gas ovens, its concentration camps, and S.S. atrocities against Jewish women and children, the Moscow government also kept quiet. The motives may have differed but the result was the same. Neither the Russian nor the Jewish population of Russia knew what the German war held in store for them.

This systematic suppression of the facts concerning the policy of mass extermination of the Jews is one of the most infamous pages in the history of Soviet war policy. At the very beginning of the war, for instance, 60,000 Jews were massacred in Riga, but this was not reported until fifteen months later. In Kerch about 7,000 Jews were killed, but on January 5, 1942, *Pravda* reported, quoting a woman who had managed to escape and who bore the Jewish name of Kivshits, that the victims included "many old men, women, and children"; it did not indicate by a single word that the murdered people were all Jews. On January 1, 1942, a Jew, S. Litvinov, who escaped from Mariupol, wrote a letter to the editor of *Pravda* under the title "I Saw It." The letter, which described the monstrous atrocities perpetrated upon the Jews, was not published in the newspaper, and only appeared

eighteen months later in a book of collected documents.

The Soviet government informed the world and its own country about the German atrocities against Soviet citizens and prisoners of war by publishing diplomatic notes addressed to all governments with which it maintained relations. The first such note was sent out on November 25, 1941. It was confined to the question of cruelty to prisoners of war. The second note, a long one, was dispatched on January 6, 1942. Its very construction was characteristic. Such a document should logically have opened with a section on the physical extermination of the people; the loss of material goods could have been discussed at the end. Instead, the note described first the burning and destruction of cities and villages, the plundering of peasants' homes, the looting in the cities, the forced labour for the needs of the German army; the campaign against Russian culture, such as the vandalism in the home of Leo Tolstoy in Yasnaia Poliana and of Peter Chaikovsky in Klin; the establishment of a military depot in the new Jerusalem monastery. And only after all this came a section on the massacres, mentioning women, children, and, at the end, the Kiev Jews: "The Germans dealt mercilessly with all Ukrainians, Russians, and Jews who had in any way shown their devotion [!] to the Soviet régime." This was followed by a description of shootings at the Jewish cemetery. Similar reports were given of atrocities in other cities.

Molotov's next note was sent out on April 27, 1942. Its contents followed the same order. Section 5 was entitled "Atrocities and Violence against the Civilian Population." The Jews were not mentioned at all, and it was never made clear that the 7,000 people murdered in Kerch, the 6,000 in Vitebsk, the 10,000 in Pinsk, the 12,000 in Minsk, and so on, were all Jews.

Eight months passed before the People's Commissariat of Foreign Affairs finally issued a special report on the extermination of the Jews. This was at the end of 1942, when it was no longer possible to remain silent and when there was no one left to be warned. By that time the entire Western press was full of the massacre of the Jews. The commissariat now quoted



certain reports of the Jewish World Congress in the United States, but even this official communiqué was expressed rather oddly.

Subsequent government communiqués also continued to avoid stressing the special status of the Jews among the victims of Hitlerism. The new Special Government Commission issued reports from time to time after the liberation of Soviet cities from German occupation. The report on Kiev merely stated vaguely that "thousands of peaceful Soviet citizens were herded together in the suburb called Babii Yar and shot." That on the German concentration camp in Maidanek, notorious for its gas ovens, made only passing reference to the Jews. The account of the city of Rovno followed the established scheme: it spoke first of the administrative partition of the Ukraine, then of the destruction in the city of Rovno, then of the looting of state and social institutions; and mentioned finally the "mass extermination of the peaceful civilian population—Ukrainians, Russians, Poles, and Jews."

As to the attitude of the Jewish population, two factors were decisive.<sup>1</sup> First, there was widespread though suppressed dissatisfaction among the majority of the Jews with the Soviet political régime; and, second, they were almost completely ignorant of what the German occupation held in store for them. The combination of these two elements created the political psychology which kept the Jews from fleeing before the invasion.

At the end of 1941 the Soviet government began to evacuate Russian scientists from the front-line areas to more remote districts in the Caucasus. Trains arrived from Leningrad, Moscow, and the western regions, and hundreds of professors specializing in varied fields met in the Caucasus retreats. Among them there was a considerable number of Jews. Thus, in Mineralnie Vody there assembled about forty Jewish professors and lecturers from Leningrad. As the German armies approached everyone was alarmed, but almost all the

<sup>1</sup> This section is based on reports about the situation in German-occupied Russia during the war received from 140 refugees in Europe and the United States.

Jews remained where they were although it would have been easy to leave. "What nonsense," said the wife of an eminent Jewish scientist from the Institute of Engineers, in a typical utterance. "Don't believe these absurd tales. They cannot be out to kill every Jew. It is only propaganda, and clumsy propaganda at that!" When the Germans came attempts were even made to negotiate with them about the position of the Jews. Soon all the Jews, the professors and others, were dead.

In another Caucasus resort, Piatigorsk, another large colony of scientists was assembled. It included a well-known gynæcologist, a professor of the Polytechnic Institute in Leningrad, a doctor and his family, and others. Before the arrival of the Germans they naturally discussed what was to be expected in the event of occupation, but not one made any move to escape. In the first days after the arrival of the German army their optimism even increased, for when the Germans began to appropriate the provisions left by the Red Army in the storehouses some of the food was given to the local population, including the Jewish professors. "You see," said the doctor, "nothing bad is happening."

When all the Jews were ordered to report, there were rumours that they would be sent to work in the mines. The new Russian administrator of Piatigorsk, failing like the others to grasp what was taking place, requested the Gestapo to free the gynæcologist. The Gestapo denied the request. Much later it became known in Piatigorsk that all the Jews taken from the city to the "mines" had been shot.

Professor Grigorii Leonidov is not a Jew, but his niece in Kiev was married to a Jew. When the Germans ordered all Jews to report, the niece's husband had to comply. Neither husband nor wife nor any of their friends and relations suspected that the Germans intended to exterminate the Jews. She decided not to part from her husband and went with the Jews on the advice of her entire family. Only when the Germans began to drive these thousands of people to Babii Yar did rumours of what was to come spread among the crowd. One of the German soldiers may have let the secret out. The



young woman tried to turn back but of course was not permitted to. She appealed to the German officers, but she had no documents; she was shot in Babii Yar together with 55,000 Jews. It was said in Kiev that many other non-Jews perished in a similar way. "If we had thought for a moment that the Jews were to be exterminated," says Professor Leonidov, "we most certainly would have hidden and saved both her and her husband."

One of my closest friends in the Baltic fleet [writes a former lieutenant] was Captain Evgenii Dolinsky, a Communist and a Jew. We had known one another for many years, and he was always frank with me. Several weeks before the German invasion he attended a closed party meeting at which a guest speaker from Moscow delivered a report on the international situation. For the first time there was mention of serious deterioration in the relations with Germany and the necessity to be prepared for a conflict. "Apparently," Dolinsky said to me, "we must expect war." I reminded him about the German treatment of the Jews and spoke of the danger that might threaten him personally. "Nonsense and propaganda," replied Dolinsky. Had he wished to Dolinsky could have obtained a transfer to another, less dangerous section of the fleet, but he never made any attempt in this direction. Soon afterward he was wounded and captured by the Germans, and there is no doubt about what they did to him.

When war broke out the Leningrad engineer Alexander Levin and his friends felt that should the Germans come the Jews "would have to endure many moral humiliations," but none of them considered the possibility of the mass extermination of Jews. Half jestingly Levin said, "I am preparing myself a Star of David on a yellow band." He was expecting to live under the Germans . . . Another Jew, a barber from Dniepropetrovsk (formerly Yekaterinoslav), asked the advice of his customers: "I don't know whether I ought to leave or stay. I cannot believe that the Germans would carry out all these threats. Of course, there will be restrictions, but surely they will let people live and work. And there will be an end

to all these cursed financial inspections, these impossible taxes, all these troubles . . .” He remained and soon afterward was killed by the Germans. In Dniepropetrovsk, as in the other cities, the first Germans seen by the population were the troops, and these were too busy to bother about the Jews; besides, it was not the army’s job to carry out the anti-Semitic operations. The Jews were left alone for the first days or weeks, until the arrival of the Gestapo and the S.S. This first period often strengthened their false optimism. It was only later that special officials and detachments arrived to deal with the Jews; then the end came quickly.

An unexpected light is cast on the emotional state of the Russian Jews by the story of Mikhail Gorokhov, a former employee of the NKGB, the People’s Commissariat of State Security, who later escaped to Europe and became a “non-returner.” He had been a member of the Communist party since he was nineteen. At the end of 1939 he was sent to one of the cities in the former Polish territory which had been annexed to the Soviet Union that September. The NKGB was entrusted at that time with the task of rapidly liquidating capitalist and anti-Soviet elements in the population. The mass deportation of Polish and Polish-Jewish citizens was under way. Gorokhov actively participated in the work, apparently with a sincere belief in its justice, at least at first.

In 1939 thousands of Jews had come from western Poland, occupied by the Germans, and settled temporarily in the various cities and towns of eastern Poland, occupied by the Soviets. The Soviet authorities invited them to come to work in the interior of Russia, but very few accepted. The majority waited, hoping for some turn in events that would permit them to return to their homes. They did not want to become Soviet citizens. Their attitude toward the Soviet way of life, which they were observing for the first time, was extremely critical, and the Soviet authorities soon became aware of it.

Once the local NKGB chief gave Gorokhov the assignment “to find out and report the reasons for their discontent.” Gorokhov put on civilian dress and visited the local cafés,



parks, and synagogue, listening and asking questions. Some time later he reported:

"They don't like our Soviet way of doing things. They feel that the work is too hard, life is too impoverished, and the queues are too long. They hope that they will not remain under the Soviet régime."

"We shall have to re-educate them!" snapped his chief. "We shall re-educate them in special institutions."

This "re-education" had apparently already been decided on somewhere higher up, and indeed deportations to concentration camps were soon begun. But even before they started joint German-Soviet "repatriation" commissions began to operate in the border areas. According to a Berlin-Moscow agreement Polish citizens were given the right to choose residence in western Poland, while on the other side of the demarcation line Ukrainians, Russians, and others could request repatriation to the east. The Joint Commission which worked on the Soviet side compiled long lists, principally of Germans and Poles who demanded evacuation to German-occupied western Poland.

But one day unexpected guests appeared at the office of the commission—Polish Jews who only a few months earlier had come to Soviet territory in their flight from Hitler. After their short stay under the Soviet régime they were ready to face again the risks of life in a country under Gestapo rule. True, the mass exterminations of Jews had not yet begun. The war in Poland was over and some semblance of order had been established. From western Poland came rumours that the Jews who remained there continued to live and work.

The Jewish rush to the repatriation commission grew daily and became widely known. The government, always sensitive to expressions of distrust, even if indirect, understood the political significance of this pilgrimage of the Jews to the Joint Commission. On orders from above, the NKGB obtained from the Soviet representative on the commission a complete list of the Jews who had declared their desire to return to the west. They numbered approximately eight hundred. To put a quick stop to this indirect demonstration against the Soviets the

NKGB arrested them all and shipped them first to the Minsk prison and thence to various concentration camps.

Today, historians preparing works on the diplomacy and strategy of World War II, archivists studying the mountains of records taken from the cellars of German ministries, military experts writing the history of the war and trying to find lessons for use in a future war, even anthropologists and psychologists, are working on a great historical riddle; how and why the attention, interest, and actual sympathy with which the Russian people first met the German armies turned so quickly to bitter hatred. Was it the fault of the Germans, with their special type of administration, or is this the general fate of all past and future occupying armies?

When and where did the reaction against the Germans begin? What started it? To these questions I received different replies from the considerable number of recent Soviet refugees I interrogated. Some of them said that the peasants expected the Germans to dissolve the kolkhozes, and were disappointed when they saw that the invaders meant to retain them. The confiscation of grain, horses, and cattle, the cruel and arbitrary rule of the new authorities, and their humiliating treatment of the population were important factors. Open looting and violence multiplied, and stories about this passed from mouth to mouth. The intelligentsia of the cities were strongly antagonized by the refusal of the Germans to keep their promise that the Russians and Ukrainians might reconstruct their own government; the Germans even refused to grant any independence—even of a nominal, if pseudo, sort—to Russia or its component nationalities. Hitler's old idea of transforming Russia into a vast German colony, an idea generally discredited because of its grandiose absurdity, was beginning to assume reality.

And then, in the midst of these events which began to reveal to the people the true face of nazism, there suddenly came the sound of machine guns, mowing down thousands of unarmed local Jews. Everyone was stunned and horrified.

We must recall that these large national groups—Russians,



Ukrainians, Bielorussians, and Jews—had lived side by side for centuries and, to some degree, were merged into a single nation. They had shared the same lot. The destiny of the Russian Jews, like that of their neighbours, had led them through the old régime, the revolution, the civil war, periods of famine, arrests, concentration camps, and great wars. There had been flare-ups of national passions, among them anti-Semitism; but for the vast mass of the people to live side by side with other nationalities was accepted habit from early childhood. In the schools Russian teachers taught Jewish children as well as others. Jewish musicians played in concerts for non-Jewish audiences. Jews and non-Jews met daily at work and had been neighbours for years. And love and marriage brought together people of different nationalities. This is why the mass extermination of Jews by the Nazis made such an impression. "Everyone was stunned," say Russian refugees from the west and the south. "The breath of death swept over everyone."

## POST-WAR TRENDS

It would be a great mistake to exaggerate the depth and extent of anti-Jewish feelings in Russia either before or after the revolution. They never had the same mass character as in Germany; they were always weaker than, say, in Poland. They lacked initiative, activity, and energy. It must be acknowledged that in this respect the first two decades of the Soviet period were a time of reduced antagonisms.

During and after the war, however, national frictions and, in particular, anti-Jewish feeling, arose when age-old political-emotional patterns were systematically and artificially revived by the government. Nazi propaganda was extremely loud about the "Jewish government" in the Kremlin, about the "Jewish NKVD," and the Red Army serving the cause of "Judeo-communism"; the German propaganda drive, fed on so much discontent and misery, did not remain ineffectual. To counter the campaign Stalin chose the easier, the more prudent, road: he restricted promotion of Jewish officers and appointments of Jewish teachers, and gave preference to

Soviet "Aryans" in appointments to prominent positions. Foreign service, in particular, was closed completely to Jews, and those already in the service were gradually but consistently eliminated. The "war emergency" was usually given as the excuse for these measures; it was said that the prejudices of the soldiers had to be reckoned with if the war was to be won. It was significant, however—and to many surprising—that these trends continued and even grew in strength after the war.

In his book on Stalin Trotsky remarked that even in earlier days some anti-Jewish feeling on the part of Stalin was obvious; in Lenin's time "he did not dare, of course, to trifle with national prejudices, as he did later when he was already in power." Trotsky cites a few occurrences to confirm his view.<sup>1</sup> There cannot be any doubt now that Trotsky was right and that whenever the weapon of anti-Semitism promised success (as, for instance, in his fight against the Communist opposition) Stalin was ready to make abundant use of it.

The Jewish question came to a head again in the autumn of 1948, when the Soviet government, in its relentless campaign against Britain, promptly recognized the government of Israel. When the first Israeli envoy arrived in Moscow, the Jewish population of Russia assumed that the right to emigrate to Palestine would now be granted. For two decades emigration from Russia had been practically banned for people of any nationality; the very desire to emigrate from the Soviet land had been considered a sign of disloyalty and treason. Mrs. Golda Meyerson, the Israeli envoy, was given ovations by the Jewish population, and requests for immigration visas began to pour in. The authorities were well aware of these facts: they represented another indirect but significant manifestation against the government, its political system, its propaganda, and its claim of national equality in the Soviet land.

Stalin's reaction was strong. The last existing Yiddish newspaper, 100 per cent Communist, was discontinued; emigration to Israel was prohibited not only from Russia but from

<sup>1</sup> Leon Trotsky, *Stalin* (New York, Harper, 1941), pp. 152, 172, 399



the satellite states as well. Ilya Ehrenburg published a made-to-order article in *Pravda* against Zionism—and saved himself from the deluge. Then the great campaign against the “cosmopolites” was launched.

Authors, literary and dramatic critics were taken to task *en masse* for their alleged preferences for Western culture and consequently for their betrayal of Russia; it was not unlike the Nazi drive against *artfremde Kunst*. Long lists of names appeared in the press—almost all of them Jewish sounding—of persons accused of lack of love for Russia and dubbed “men without a country,” “frenzied cosmopolites,” and “vagabonds without passports.” The frenzy grew. Soon these persons were “gangsters,” “bastards,” “reptiles,” and “emasculated decadents.” All of them of course were promptly driven from their posts on newspapers and magazines and in publishing houses. Soon the music critics’ turn came. Among them, too, vast numbers of “cosmopolites” were discovered. The press accused them of positive attitudes toward “the art of Charlie Chaplin and Hemingway,” of “formalism,” and adherence to “idealism” instead of “realism.” The purge devoured them, too.

The press drive subsided after a time, but the “cosmopolites” did not return to their jobs. As far as the general climate was concerned, the situation did not improve. To anyone familiar with the situation in Moscow it was obvious that this campaign of vituperation, caricature, and sarcasm would never have been possible without a green light from Stalin personally; that the press only repeated words, terms, and pleasantries exchanged in the Leader’s living room; that, in short, Stalin was the actual initiator of the campaign.

The basic cause of this post-war development was the sensational growth of a rabidly anti-Western trend in Soviet policy and propaganda after the war and the fact that the Jews among the Russian people have been pro-Western for generations. Antagonistic to the pre-revolutionary political system, the Jews migrated from Russia in greater numbers than any other nationality; they sent their children to be educated abroad; they had connections, friends, and relatives

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in the West. Many were enthusiastic admirers of Britain's parliamentary system; for thousands France was the mecca. When the new era arrived, many were attracted by communism, especially by communism of the "Western" type (Trotskyism and some other dissident trends). Stalin's new eastward orientation is profoundly alien to them.

Since this orientation is an important part of the Soviet post-war drive toward aggrandizement and against the "rotten West," no change can be expected except for the worse. The situation of the Jews cannot improve under the conditions existing at present in Russia. They are tragically caught between the Communist hammer and the imperialist anvil, and there is no easy exit from such a plight.



## Chapter VIII

# THE SOCIAL REVOLUTION COMPLETED

**A**LONG WITH the upsurge of a new nationalism, the post-war years in Russia have been marked by the stabilization of the new social system and a rapid advance of the second generation.

There is nothing new about the present social structure; the relationships among its various strata—between upper and lower classes, their standards of life, cultural levels, and feelings toward one another—is essentially what it was before the war. No fundamental changes have occurred. What is new is the stability of this system.

To the upper strata it was reassuring that one post-war decree after another prescribed a complete return to the *status quo*. Some had expected that the kolkhoz system would be relaxed to allow some private initiative in the rural economy. Many had hoped that one horse would be permitted every peasant family. Others were sure that the rigid law which prohibits workers and employees from changing their jobs at will would be abolished. Many in Russia wondered, as did people abroad, whether the new degree of international security would not automatically mean a smaller army, less armaments, less bureaucracy, and a million polit-commissars, propagandists, MVD men, army officers moved out of their privileged positions.

Nothing of the kind happened. Never was a social system restored as completely as in Russia after the war. This created a general sense of a broad stability. To some it was welcome; to others it was a source of bitter disappointment.

With the restoration and stabilization of the social system, an important psychological evolution in communism was

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completed. Hundreds of adroit zigzags, tactical changes, manœuvres mark the history of the Communist government; there has been, however, very little genuine evolution in outlook and philosophy. Such changes take decades to ripen; they are not accomplished by the movement itself, which, like an established religion, takes pride in the immutability and eternity of its precepts.

Deep in the Communist faith two great moral-social principles lay as the source of devotion and dynamism: first, it is morally monstrous that there should be extremes of rich and poor and that misery should be the lot of the mass of humanity. Second, it is immoral for men to possess the material means, the "means of production," to hire other men, buy their labour, and make a profit from it.

In those bygone times when socialism and communism were bred it appeared to their adherents that these two principles were twins: as soon as the "means of production" were owned by society the divergence in social standards would rapidly decrease and then fade out altogether; this moment would mark the end of poverty and of all the evils it has generated in the history of mankind. It was a grim joke of history to separate the two phases from each other and then to show the result to the world.

Before 1917 the strongest impetus of the revolutionary movement in Russia came from the hope and promise that the almost unbelievably low standard of living of the Russian people could and would be raised by a political upheaval. The obsolete system of government seemed to be both the source and product of an obsolete economy and outworn systems of exploitation, taxation, and education. In particular it was expected that a distribution of landlords' estates would put an end to the hardships of the peasantry, and that Russian trade unions, with freedom to grow and develop, would be able to raise workers' wages to a high level. On the eve of the revolution peasants and industrial workers numbered about 150,000,000, approximately 85 per cent of the population of Russia.



There were no differences of views, in this respect, between the various ideological factions in Russia's revolutionary movement. To the Narodniki (the Populists) the main objective of the coming transformation was improvement of the lot of the peasantry. The Marxists, among them Lenin, considered themselves a workers' movement; they, too, expected a rise in the living standards of the peasants and workers after the revolution. The lengthy second chapter of Lenin's best work—actually his only scientific study—*The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, described the misery and appalling living conditions of the Russian farmer. There was not a shred of doubt in Lenin's mind that the lot of the peasantry must improve as a consequence of a successful revolution. *The Starving Village* by Andrei Shingarev, later leader of the moderate Cadet party, became famous. To the authors of these works as well as to the multitude of their readers it was an axiom that the political revolution would immensely improve general social conditions in Russia.

Had anyone voiced the opinion that the coming revolution would bring a significant improvement for only a few, that but 5-8 per cent of the people would attain well-being as the successors of the old upper class, the prediction would have been rejected indignantly. The revolution of 1918-25 was distinguished by its ideology of both egalitarianism and anti-capitalism. Private industry and land were nationalized, with the aim of equalizing the standards of living; it seemed axiomatic that the two tasks were interrelated. Hundreds of decrees and instructions were issued to this effect; much blood was spilled to achieve the goals rapidly. If exceptions to egalitarianism had to be made, they were considered shameful and were kept secret.

I remember well the first feeble and uncertain steps taken by Russia along this road. In 1918 railway service was revolutionized. The old distinction between coaches for the rich (first and second class) and coaches for the poor (third class and boxcar) was naturally abolished and a single tariff introduced. Within a few weeks, however, without advance notice there appeared on each railway train one coach bearing a sign

"For Delegates." This relatively comfortable coach was reserved for men and women elected by the people and assigned to travel to conferences or congresses, of which a multitude were held in the first years after the revolution; or for persons travelling to provincial Soviets or to Moscow on government or party business. Delegates chosen by and having the confidence of the people have the right to enjoy some comfort while travelling—this was the contention. Soon every official whether elected or not travelled as a delegate. The crowds of delegates of 1918-21 were convinced that historical justice had secured these privileges for them as a reward for the misery and privation they had endured before. For the first time privilege appeared in the cloak of equality!

I remember too the time when the highest state officials began to enjoy some simple comforts—private apartments and cars to take them to their work. These comforts they at first felt obliged to justify to their own consciences and to their followers. Lenin never dressed neatly. His diplomats proudly paraded in their "workers' blouses" and shabby shoes at the Brest-Litovsk Peace Conference; lavish banquets and receptions were eliminated. Trotsky aroused bitter animosity by travelling in comfort in his own train, with his guards and troops. Today every party secretary of an *oblast* (provincial) committee enjoys comforts a hundredfold more elaborate than those for which Trotsky was reproached.

The first official violation of the concept of equality was the NEP of 1921, which introduced free trade and gave some leeway to foreign capitalists in Russia. This meant, however, no real break with basic principles; the NEP appeared, not as an evolution of Soviet ideology, but rather as an expedient, a tactical concession to outmoded world practices, a temporary stratagem.

Later the two tendencies began to conflict. Private business and private property were prohibited; restrictions were increasing. By the end of the 'twenties no private business was legally permissible; there were no longer any banks, industrial concerns, or real property of any importance.

But at the same time the stratification of the new society was



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progressing, with social layers of rich and poor emerging out of the uniform mass. Soon this process won official sanction, even encouragement; the prospect of high earnings began to be considered a powerful economic stimulus. Now communism shut its eyes to the stratification of its society with extremes of wealthy and very poor; such was the ironic outcome of three decades of evolution. The passionate, always impetuous, unrestrained movement suddenly became philosophical and placid when it faced the kind of issue that had formerly fired it to action.

Communist leaders were not at all disturbed when they noted that, as a result of the transformation, the first had become the last but the last had not become the first. Only a small minority of the people were able to advance. For the masses—the inarticulate, the obedient, the silent—the upheaval brought numerous changes but rarely for the better. This replacement of an obsolete, decrepit class by a new one was carried out in the name of equality. While the slogans—equality of human beings and an end to exploitation—were new, the real meaning of the shift was the same as before: *Ote toi de là que je m'y mette* ("Get out of there so I can take your place"). The elimination of the old classes had been a matter of justice in the raw; the setting up of new upper strata was not accomplished by elegant methods either. An iron curtain was needed behind which to hide.

This is not the first time in Russian history that a new privileged class has arisen from below to displace the former *élite* and to concentrate in its hands great political and economic power. Each time the new class has been made up of men of humble descent who were tough and ruthless. At least twice before, and now, in the Soviet period, for a third time, the established upper "estate" has had to quit in a body and cede its position and privileges to new young blood. From the lower strata of society a new *élite* has emerged. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries it consisted at first of warriors whose services were employed to defend the shifting borders of the state. All sorts of people, including a good many of humble

origin, made up these new cadres: slaves were freed and granted landholdings for their service; farm hands on appanage estates became members of the gentry. During an earlier era the boyars of ancient Russia had won their privileged position in a similar way.

In their day the tsars, by forceful and at times cruel means, thus shaped a new privileged group out of the amorphous popular mass. Today the new master class, having again risen from among the humble, is being moulded systematically by the powerful administration of cadres in the Central Committee of the Communist party. For many years Stalin has been its absolute master; his rôle of moulder of the new commanding staff accounts for his limitless power and for the endless eulogies accorded him. Since the days of Lenin, Stalin has controlled personnel matters, with power of appointment and dismissal. He has showered authority and glory on some, withdrawn his favour from others, and sent still others to their death. He has been a dreaded father: "I have sired you; I may kill you." The survivors have Stalin to thank for their lives; the dead cannot protest. Thus he has become the infallible creator. But he is not a god of mercy and forgiveness; he is closer to the punishing and relentless God of the ancient Hebrews. Georgii Malenkov now occupies the position which Stalin held for years. He will never attain the full authority of a totalitarian dictator because the principal job is done, the cadres have been formed. The task today is the upkeep and training of these cadres. Roughly, the ruling class has been formed; it is already dividing into a rigid hierarchy; it is clothed in resplendent uniforms, it has donned medals and decorations. Foreigners marvel at the Russian predilection for medals, not understanding that to the "activist" his medal is material proof of his success.

A successful life, but far from a cloudless one. The shadowing, the denunciations, the arrests, the purges, the prisons, the executions are a constant *memento mori*. One fears, one obeys; obeys but longs for change. One does not know precisely what one wants but above all it is security and more human rights.



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### SOCIAL REVOLUTION IN THE SATELLITES

In the satellite countries new sets of Communist leaders who achieved power after the war typified the new stage reached by the movement in general. They did not attempt to tread the thorny path of equality, modesty, and abstinence; their parties, once in power, made no pretence at egalitarianism. From the very beginning privileges for the higher-ups were recognized as necessary, useful, and convenient. Ana Pauker in Bucharest did not try to follow the difficult example of the former Soviet first lady, Nadezhda Krupskaya-Lenin; and Mathias Rakosi in Hungary was eager to compensate himself for his years in prison under Regent Horthy. If "socialism" can be established as a hierarchy of heterogeneous classes, why be modest?

Under the eyes of their peoples and of foreign observers the satellite leaders moved into luxurious villas, surrounded themselves with hosts of servants, obtained private railway cars and airplanes, and began to arrange banquets *à la* Moscow.

Rank-and-file East German Communists were shocked when they heard how the new leaders were arranging their private lives amid the misery of post-war Germany; how the best of the "nationalized" estates, now "the people's property," were being turned over to Stalin's imitators on German soil. Soon the new "president," Wilhelm Pieck, was nicknamed Wilhelm III and his estate dubbed Pieckistan. Tito of Yugoslavia was no better and no worse than other viceroys of Stalin; when he broke with Moscow, however, all the dogs were turned loose on him, and east European capitals outdid one another in describing his palaces, his banquets, the evening gowns of the ladies, the luxurious automobiles, the choice wines in his cellars. Mathias Rakosi depicted Tito's grand receptions:

In the great hall three hundred generals stand; they are covered from head to toe with gold and silver brocade and medals. Beside them stand pretty women in splendid evening gowns. Waiters wear snow-white tail coats trimmed with gold. The tables groan under huge gold and

silver plates bearing roasts. Eighty different kinds of hors d'oeuvres are served. There is an abundance of wine: Tokay, Bordeaux, Frascati, and of course, champagne.

The living standards of Rumania's top Communist, Ana Pauker, have been vividly pictured by Hal Lehrman in *Life* magazine:

The Paukers do themselves proud in the matter of living space. They occupy the 47-room royal palace, a lakeside villa at Snagov and no less than three town houses, one of which has electrically operated doors and a dining room which seats 24. Another is a sumptuous villa which King Carol once gave to Magda Lupescu. The third, the property of a pharmaceutical magnate who is permanently vacationing in Paris, possesses a vast Roman-style bathroom with nude murals. Like her current abomination, Marshal Tito, Ana has an Alsatian police dog, a female, to reinforce the small regiment of soldiers which guards her various holdings.

Shortly after her return from Russia Mrs. Pauker marched into the capital's largest and most expensive department store and bought a raft of expensive clothes, shoes and handbags for herself. Seeing the salesgirl's eyes bulge, she snorted, "Did you expect a Communist to dress in rags?" Today she is the clotheshorse of Rumania, a subject of carefully suppressed mirth even among the faithful. Nobody criticizes her taste, which though expensive is subdued. Her misfortune is that she is not exactly set up for glamour. Nevertheless she keeps abundantly abreast of the latest fashions . . . She shops amply and regularly at Wieser's the fanciest Bucharest dress house, and at Reich's, the best furrier. Special creations are flown in from Paris.<sup>1</sup>

In all satellite countries the Communist party displaced the old social *élite*; then, to carry on the latter's political functions, it initiated privileges for its own members; finally the new order began to solidify, like lava after an eruption. The emerging *élite* class was acquiring vested interests and new habits.

<sup>1</sup> *Life*, January 3, 1949.



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Social classes remained; their molecular composition changed. The first new "cadres" of the present set-up—the vanguard—comprised the small group of Stalinists who had remained loyal through the years and who were now rewarded by social advancement; groups of members of other parties willing to embrace the new faith and take an oath of loyalty; intellectuals attracted by royalties, subventions, monopoly, and respect; workers making use of the unique opportunity to give up hard work and to advance, with their families, into the well-fed sections of the population; officials who saw the day had arrived for them to replace their superiors and acquire power in the state and in the economy. Dozens of other sources poured new blood into the new class every day.

New blood infusing the former contingents of the upper classes—this is the main effect of the upheavals. In every other country a few drops of new blood are added to the top group every year: a former bellboy becomes a millionaire, a young man of obscure origin carries out a coup on the stock exchange; but on the whole the upper groups maintain stability, and this stability, coupled with education, makes it possible for them to perpetuate themselves as the upper-income groups of the nation. A cataclysm like that now going on in eastern Europe and the Far East pushes down all the former higher-ups—with their pride, exclusiveness, and contempt for those below but also with their education, experience, skill, and understanding of world affairs and of the workings of the national economy. The discarding of these accumulated abilities makes a crisis inevitable after a social revolution.

Gradually the new upper class settles down to business and to learning. The newcomers are, on the whole, able men, in many respects superior to the average citizen. They study and they learn. Their children receive the best possible education. A third generation may produce leaders and scientists in no way inferior to those relegated to obscurity in the great upheavals of the 1940's. Before this can happen, however, two or three generations must live out their lives in a climate of conflicts, crises, and terrorism, and during these years no

real improvement in the lot of the general population can be expected.

Contrary to the official assertion, the social revolution in the East does not revolve around the "well-being of the masses" but around the "well-being of the few." Restriction of freedom, even terrorism, could be forgiven by a people if, as a temporary measure, they were the price of putting an end to age-old starvation and misery of an intensity unknown in the West. Yet precisely this has remained unchanged in the satellites as well as in Russia. The economy has changed, the political system has been turned upside down, but for the millions who are the mainstay of the nations recurring famine, oppressive taxation, lack of decent housing and of the simplest necessities are as prevalent today as in the past.

The class of state employees in Communist-dominated nations differs from the typical "bourgeoisie" of the textbooks in two respects: on one hand, it can never attain the fantastic wealth of the top-bracket group in a capitalist society; in this the officialdom of "socialism" is at a disadvantage. On the other hand, its high position and income are secure and not subject to economic ups and downs; assuming they have political loyalty, the members of this class get along.

As soon as conditions become ripe, as soon as the new classes feel secure against their internal and external enemies, a shift from universal state economy to private enterprise will become possible and will, to many, appear desirable. A political crisis, a conflict with the remnants of the orthodox Communist faith, may occur; at such a moment the weight of the new leading groups will be pitted against the orthodox minority. Up to that point a universal state economy will have served as a good protective ideology.

The world has more than once had a chance to observe and to be astonished at the ease with which communism rejects its old tenets, repudiates its old precepts, and preaches opposite ones. We saw Russian communism abolish ranks in the army and then, with amazing nonchalance, revive them in all their splendour. It abolished capital punishment and reintroduced



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it. It decried piecework and reverted to it. First it preached egalitarianism, then it jailed Communists for adherence to the idea. Hundreds of other remnants of the past have vanished only to reappear as innovations, great "progressive achievements." Stalin has never been a partisan of inflexibility to his disciples. Nothing should be easier for the unorthodox than to demonstrate, when the time comes, the advantages for the "toiling masses" of private interests in certain sections of the national economy, and to silence the incorrigibles who oppose this "progressive reform."

## Chapter IX

# THE SOVIET ÉLITE AND THE SECOND GENERATION

**T**HE HABITS and the standards of living of the upper social group will retain their significance for some time to come. They will influence the timing and the course of a political crisis, if one occurs; and they will survive the crisis. The pages that follow contain reports depicting and illustrating the standards and customs of the new Soviet *élite*; they are selected as the most reliable from a number of oral and written accounts dealing with the subject.

### THE SOVIET VERSION OF SOCIALIZED MEDICINE

"I have seen excellent hospitals in Germany, France, and the United States," says Dr. Georgii Alexandrov, a Russian physician of over twenty years' experience, "but I have never seen one as well equipped or as luxurious as the Kremlin hospital which, in calibre of physicians and personnel, appointments of private suites, and quality of diet is superior to any hospital in the country, and in its medical equipment and drugs is not inferior to any hospital abroad."

The Soviet Ministry of Health embraces a considerable number of local and district health agencies; the local Kremlin health unit is independent of the ministry; it occupies a separate and prominent place because it has the obligation of caring for the physical well-being of the Soviet leaders. In line with the trends prevailing since the end of the 'twenties, state employees working in the Kremlin are divided into several groups: the top one comprises the thirty to forty most important Soviet dignitaries; the second highest, the members of the Central Committee of the Communist party, ministers of the Soviet Union (not of the national republics), a few of



the "people's artists" and top-level writers. All, however, enjoy much greater privileges than the general mass of the population. The hierarchy is rigid and individual families are classified according to orders given by the Council of Ministers.

Each dignitary of the top class has his own doctor, who has no other patients and no medical responsibilities save caring for the health of his patient and his family. Care implies an interest in the patient's way of life—his living conditions, his smoking habits, his travel arrangements, his recreation; a periodic general check-up using all types of examinations and analyses; and consultation, when necessary, with the highest medical authorities, including physicians from abroad. The doctor accompanies his patient on his journeys, along with the latter's secretary and special MVD bodyguard. Kremlin physicians are sworn never to divulge what they learn, as physicians, in the Kremlin.

The second group in the Kremlin leadership must share the doctor's services with others: here one physician serves five or six families. In the third group fifteen to twenty families share the services of one doctor. Only the highest group have access to the Kremlin hospital when hospitalization is required. The others go to the clinic in Staropanskaia Street or to the clinic on the Arbat, both of which are closed to the general population of Moscow.

The main Kremlin hospital and clinics are situated in Komintern Street (formerly Vozdvizhenka), close to the Kremlin. They occupy several buildings, although the hospital accommodates only 100-120 patients. There are a number of private suites of three rooms, furnished with rugs, paintings, mirrors. Two gardeners are kept busy supplying them with flowers. The kitchen provides exquisite food and is obliged, unless the physician objects, to satisfy every desire of the patient. Fresh berries, fruits, and vegetables from the Caucasus are available to these patients in the winter time—an almost incredible luxury in Russia. Other impressive features of the Kremlin hospital are its medical apparatus and its store of drugs. Unlike the general Soviet pharmacies with their limited

supplies of ersatz drugs, the Kremlin hospital pharmacy has the new foreign drugs—sulfa, penicillin, streptomycin, and others.

Resorts for convalescents and for those in need of rest are part of the Kremlin's system. These are situated in the south—in the Crimea (Foros) and in the Caucasus (Sochi, Kislovodsk, Gagry, Tskhakhaltuba). The sanatorium in Foros, where the tsar had a palace, has an A and a B division. In 1936 the appropriation for food in the A division was 35 roubles a day per patient, and in the B division 22 roubles (wines excepted). To appreciate what this means one must know that the salary of a charwoman at that time in Foros was 90 roubles a month. The sanatorium area is isolated from the outside world, and nobody may be admitted without a special permit. A number of plain-clothes police agents watch the entrances, while others are on guard on the grounds.

Dinner at the sanatorium is a seven- or eight-course meal. The cook is careful to provide variety, and rare foods are often served, such as the fish called *petukh* (cock) which occasionally appeared on the tsar's dining table, and patties filled with caviar. In the old cellars are large stores of the best wines for "improving the appetite." The surrounding parks are more beautiful than they ever were when the tsar lived there. Swans move gracefully in the ponds; from the trees hang cages with rare birds. Saddle horses and European cars, including the British Rolls-Royce, are at the disposal of the guests.

Every whim of the convalescent is to be gratified. The young wife of a Soviet dignitary told her doctor that she could use no laxative except French prunes, as they are called in Russia: there being no French prunes in the sanatorium, a supply was immediately ordered from Moscow and brought in by plane the next morning. A few weeks later the wife of another dignitary strained an abdominal muscle during morning gymnastics; a surgeon and a gynæcologist were flown in from Moscow to care for her. Only a year before, the lady in question had been a typist; a year later she was back at her machine. Her husband, because of some mistakes



in the Spanish civil war in which he had been involved, was purged by the Soviet authorities and executed.

Two leaders from the Mongolian People's Republic spent a few weeks resting in the Foros sanatorium. One was the powerful Choi Bal-san, whose favourite dish was *shashlik* (meat roasted over charcoal) made of young lamb slaughtered by him personally. Each morning his retinue gathered around him, the lamb was brought, and the solemn ceremony performed.

Along with genuine physicians, quack doctors have a considerable following among Soviet dignitaries and, in particular, among their wives. For a time a Doctor Kazakov, an astute adventurer, turned some heads with his *leezat* medicine—a kind of homeopathy. (It was rumoured among Kremlin doctors that Stalin had tried *leezat* for a time.) Later Doctor Zamkov attracted attention with his *gravidan*—a drug derived from the urine of pregnant women.

The Ministry of the Armed Forces likewise has its own doctors, hospitals, and sanatoriums, its main hospital being in Znamenka Street. Medical care in the Defence Department as in the civilian government is dispensed according to rank in the hierarchy. The MVD too has its own exclusive system of health agencies throughout the country, the chief hospital being in Varsanofievsky in Moscow.

The medical care of the general population differs markedly from the exclusive systems of the Kremlin, the Defence Ministry, and the MVD. In the Soviet system of public health the population of a district (in Moscow 2,000-3,000 people) is attached to one "dispensary," consisting usually of a doctor and a nurse. The doctors in these dispensaries may see thirty or more patients in a three-hour session; they cannot devote more than this amount of time to their offices since they are also obliged to make house calls. The average time devoted to a patient is therefore six to seven minutes, half of which is spent filling out a form called the bulletin, which authorizes the patient to stay away from work during his illness. Without it he incurs punishment for absence. The need for speed in the doctor's office is such that

a careful examination of the patient is often impossible.

The same is true of house calls. Without taking off his overcoat the doctor puts a few questions, examines the patient, fills out the bulletin, gives quick orders, and hastens off on his next call.

Only a small minority among the general population can afford to consult a doctor privately; for the greater number the dispensary and this sort of house call must suffice.

Many drugs are lacking in the general pharmacies. Of course no foreign medicinal products are available to the mass of the population. A small minority acquire foreign drugs in the black market, where prices are exorbitant. On the eve of the war a gramme of sulfodyn sold for 1,000 roubles. The importance of the sulfa drugs in cases of infection and in surgery was kept secret from the physicians of the Soviet Union until 1941. Production of the drug, although limited, was proceeding; the government, however, had ordered the accumulation of large stores of sulfa for war purposes. When Germany attacked, Professor Burdenko, chief surgeon of the Red Army, divulged the secret of the sulfa drugs to the medical personnel and large quantities of the drugs were then sent to the front. Unfortunately the rapidly advancing German armies seized these drugs along with stores of all kinds of other medicaments. The net result, therefore, was that civilians did not have the use of the drugs in peacetime and the army lost them soon after the war started. It was not until the lend-lease programme began to operate that sulfa appeared in Soviet hospitals.

There are convalescent homes in the Crimea and in the Caucasus for the Russian man in the street. Conducted mainly by trade unions and partly by the Ministry of Health, they differ from the sanatoriums for the *élite* just as the Kremlin hospital differs from the general ones. The ordinary convalescent home is poorly equipped; lack of dishes, glassware, and linen is the general rule; there are not even enough electric bulbs; the food is mediocre or worse.

One day in 1935 four German Communists just freed from one of Hitler's concentration camps arrived in Russia and



were sent to a general rest home in the Crimean resort of Alupka for rehabilitation. After a short stay they wrote to the MOPR in Moscow (a kind of Red Cross for Communists) that living conditions in Hitler's camps were better than in the Soviet sanatorium. Immediately a commission arrived to investigate the charge and find who was responsible. It indicted the doctor in charge of the rest home and the chief accountant. (The latter was an American who had returned with his father to his native Russia in 1923 in order to help build the socialist society.) A public trial was put on. Because living conditions in the rest homes are a constant source of criticism and indignation, interest among the population was great and a large crowd filled the courtroom. The defendants were able, by facts and documents, to show how little attention the government had paid to their complaints and how inadequate the appropriations for the sanatorium were. After the first day it was decided to discontinue public proceedings and the trial was completed quietly in a small hall on the upper floor to which access could be had only through a back door. Since acquittal in such a case is out of the question, the defendants were sentenced to six months of obligatory work at their present jobs and a deduction of 15 per cent of their salaries for the same period.

Quantitatively Soviet medicine has advanced greatly since the revolution. The number of doctors has increased more than four-fold. Medical care is available now in areas where it was lacking before. In quality, however, Soviet medicine, so far as the mass of patients is concerned, has deteriorated enormously. It has deteriorated also—especially since the reforms of 1930—with respect to the education and training of physicians.

Medical care in the cities is often appalling. Russian cities have grown rapidly since the end of the 'twenties; hospitals, however, are considered less important than industrial plants, and appropriations for public health in the mushrooming cities have been insufficient. The hospitals are overcrowded and gravely ill persons must often wait three or four days for admission; frequently the patient dies in the interim.

Tuberculosis sanatoriums are so overcrowded that the normal stay of a patient is only two months; sometimes this is extended to four months, but never longer.

"It would be a serious mistake," wrote Professor N. Priorov, vice-minister of public health, in the Soviet publication *Medical Worker* of August 1946, "to assert that at the present time the majority of our hospitals are adequate to meet the demands made upon them and that they are really curative institutions . . . Even in Moscow and Leningrad there are some hospitals that are no credit to public health." He named hospitals in Moscow, Vologda, Murmansk, Astrakhan, and elsewhere; they stand, he said, "in acute need of medicines and equipment." Many endocrine preparations, for instance, are not available for medical practice because "our industry does not satisfy the demand for them." Doctors cannot always get glass for cupping, and there is not enough insulin, glucose, or urotropin. He reveals incidentally the backward state of Soviet medicine when he says that leeches are difficult to obtain.

The conditions criticized by the vice-minister existed in 1946; at that time the valid excuse was that the wounds of the war had not yet healed. Three years later, however, when rehabilitation and reconstruction were proudly announced as complete, public health remained in the same state as before. In a letter addressed to the minister of health and published in the *Literary Gazette* in September 1949 Dr. Olga Dzhigurda wrote:

The hardships of the first [post-war] period are over now. Hospitals, clinics, nurseries are operating. Many buildings have been repaired, some have been rebuilt. . . .

We cannot understand why purified tar for ointments is lacking. The Wilkinson, Vyshnevsky, and many other ointments are not produced by our pharmacies because of the alleged lack of purified tar.

The pediatricians of the children's dispensary and the children's hospital in Zaporozhie have asked me to mention the lack of ascorbic acid, Danish King's drops, pepsin, oil-cloth for babies. The ministry may consider all this rather



trivial, but I want you to know how the medical industries are working and how they neglect such trifles.

Can we tolerate the poor quality of the so-called Kocher clamps? For a long time our laryngology division has been looking for an apparatus for electrocautery. Two months ago we received it through the administration of dispensaries, but the apparatus was not usable because it was sold without cauters and wires. The expensive apparatus lies around unused. For many months the surgical division of our hospital has been in need of a good autoclave; the old one is permanently out of order. Recently we received the long-awaited autoclave in a fine wrapping, but when we unpacked it we found a camp disinfection apparatus instead of an autoclave . . .

Some of the blood pressure apparatus is of very poor quality. The rubber bulbs which pump air into the cuff tear easily and the whole apparatus becomes unusable. The sphygmomanometer itself is well constructed, but the bands which fasten the cuff to the patient's arm are so short that it is impossible to use it.

It is hard to get 10-20 cc. syringes and needles for them. The syringes we receive are of poor quality, the plungers do not fit, and they leak.

It is a paradox that the system of socialized medicine, the idea of which was to reduce the gap between rich and poor in so far as care of health is concerned, has served in Russia to widen the distances between social groups. Medical services are universally available free of charge, but the Kremlin unit of the Sanupr (Sanitary Department) and a few others like it spend tremendous amounts to create a privileged position for a particular group of Soviet citizens and their families. For obvious reasons these items of the Soviet budget have never been made public. They constitute actual increases in the income of the highest social groups. "In no capitalist country," says Dr. Alexandrov in his report, "is the abyss between rich and poor as deep as in the Soviet Union: this is the objective result of her public health system."

In his book on his war years in Russia<sup>1</sup> Enrique Castro

<sup>1</sup> *J'ai perdu la foi à Moscou* (Paris, 1950), p. 177.

Delgado mentions two hospitals in the city of Ufa in the Urals. As a member of the Presidium of the Communist International, Delgado was evacuated to Ufa late in 1941, along with the staff of the Comintern. There he suffered an attack of pleurisy, and because of his high standing a bed was quickly found for him in the overcrowded hospital. The treatment, food, and accommodation for patients were such, however, that after a short stay he demanded to be sent home. Surprised and shocked, his Spanish friends arranged for him to be transferred to the NKVD hospital in the same city. Despite the war, the general lack of food, and personnel shortages, conditions in this hospital were excellent. Delgado was given the necessary medicines; items which in 1942 were luxuries, such as coffee with milk and cigarettes, were supplied in abundance; the nursing service was kindly and efficient; the floors and walls were clean. Delgado recovered. But his experience in the two hospitals was one of the motivating factors which later impelled him to quit the party. "In the Comintern," he says, "there were three categories: A, B, C. In the Lux Hotel [where the *élite* of the Communist émigrés lived] there were three categories: A, B, C. In the hospitals there are also three categories: A, B, C. Why do they call it a classless society?"

#### "COUNTRY HOUSES"

Nothing is more characteristic of a social group than its homes and the way its members spend their free time. A "personal country house" is a new Soviet term used to avoid the word villa which to prudish Communist ears suggests aristocratic or capitalist living.<sup>1</sup>

Marshals Voroshilov and Budenny, Nikita Khrushchov, and a few others of the top leadership spend their vacations in the summer houses of the late tsar in Krasnaia Poliana in the Caucasus. The road to the resort, cut out of rock, runs more than five miles along a steep chasm; the houses stand inside a large reservation where the dignitaries practise bear hunting,

<sup>1</sup> This section dealing with housing conditions in general and the so-called country houses of the *élite* is in the main based on a report by Alexander Yurlov, a Soviet engineer and architect, who himself was active in the building of these homes, partly under the supervision of the NKVD.



which is their favourite diversion as it was the Tsar Nicholas II's. Stalin's personal country house, Villa Nadezhda (named after his second wife), is located on the Black Sea, between Sochi and Adler. Built in 1933 from plans drawn by the well-known Soviet architect Yofan, it stands near the Stalin Skyway, amid the magnificent landscape of the Caucasus. Its comforts are fabulous and its security complete.

Because of the distance from Moscow these villas can serve only for prolonged vacations. Stalin spends his week-ends at his other country home, Perkhushkovo, twenty-five miles from Moscow on the Bielorussian-Baltic Railroad. Close by are the villas of Molotov and a few other Politburo members. The buildings stand on a hill in the midst of a small fir forest.

Stalin's suburban villa has seventeen rooms. Before the war the dictator used to spend his week-ends here with Rosa, his third wife, the sister of Lazar Kaganovich whose villa is adjacent. From a spacious and airy entrance hall a massive oak staircase leads to the second floor. The floors in all the rooms are of expensive walnut and mahogany inlaid with ebony. Some of the walls are panelled with planewood, others with Karelian birch. There are Gobelin tapestries and silk hangings; the doorknobs are cast of bronze after special designs. There is indirect lighting everywhere. The floors, and often the walls, are covered with valuable Turkestan, Persian, and Chinese rugs.

What is remarkable about the interior decoration of these personal homes of the leaders is the utter absence of anything "revolutionary": no busts of Marx, no portraits of Lenin, none of Grekov's battle scenes from the civil war. The walls are adorned with magnificent examples of classic art—Russian, French, and Italian. The establishments are bourgeois to the core: hothouses, orchids in vases, chambermaids in starched aprons, menservants in white gloves and white jackets, warmed plates for dinner, the most expensive caviar on ice, strawberries in December . . .

Muscovites living in the Arbat section of the city usually learn of Stalin's impending departure from the Kremlin half an hour in advance. When he is ready to enter his car a signal

light is flashed from the Kremlin and policemen stop all cross-town traffic. Soon the Kremlin's Borovitsky gates are thrown wide open and five black limousines roll out. Everything is calculated to make impossible any attempt on the Leader's life. The Borovitsky gates, for instance, are built at such an angle to the street that anyone looking in from outside sees nothing but walls; out of this maze of walls the five cars suddenly emerge, all alike in appearance, with windows of yellowish shatterproof glass.

The five limousines, one of which carries Stalin, run down the Arbat (which Muscovites have dubbed the "Georgian Military Highway") at over fifty miles an hour. Everyone in the streets stops—knowing who is passing. The motorcade leaves the city and proceeds down the Mozhaisk Highway in the direction of Perkhushkovo. As the cars signal their approach all other traffic ceases on the highway.

Stalin's estate is under twenty-four-hour guard, which is divided into zonal, external, and internal sections. The zonal guard is in charge of security within a radius of six miles. Directly responsible for the zonal guard is a special Leadership Guard Corps. The troops assigned to this duty are on detached service from the OSNAZ, the Division for Special Assignment of the MVD. They are stationed in the vicinity of the villa, in the forest, and on the roads, partly in the open and partly concealed. There is a police dog at each post. Special control points are provided with telephones. In addition, the whole forest is electrified, like a bank vault. Touching any of the live wires turns on an elaborate system of lights and sets off alarms.

The second guard network is the external. It is stationed in the immediate vicinity of the villa, with the same kind of electric wires and posters stating: "It is strictly forbidden to proceed further." A wall around the entire estate makes it impossible for any outsider to look in; the wall is guarded by MVD patrols and dogs. About half a mile from the wall, some six hundred yards apart, are the country homes of the five top leaders.

The third cordon, the internal guard, is stationed within



the walls. This is composed of regular MVD troops and gardeners, cooks, menservants, chauffeurs, housemaids. All these people are under orders to keep watch on one another. They all know that they are individually and collectively responsible for the least sign of disloyalty within the confines of the estate. The past of each employee is known to the MVD in detail, and the secret police keep the closest check on their activities and contacts.

Soviet aristocrats live in comfort like this only so long as they blindly follow the dictates of the top leadership. As soon as anyone becomes suspect the party is over. The late commander-in-chief of the Red Army, Sergei Sergeievich Kamenev (not to be confused with Lev Kamenev of the Communist opposition), was suspected of contact with the "traitor" Marshal Tukhachevsky, and was promptly reclassified an "enemy of the people." The "evidence" in this case did not come to light until after Kamenev's death, but his widow and children were then expelled from his country home and his ashes in their urn under the Kremlin wall were disinterred and scattered to the winds. Infidels are punished not only during their lifetime but even after death.

When it is decided to build a new country home for a leading Soviet official, the Economics Administration of the Supreme Soviet decrees a closed (i.e., secret) contest among architects for plans. The best-known Soviet architects, such as Shchusev, Rudnev, Alabian, Shchuko, and Yofan, usually take part. Each contributor is generously rewarded for his blueprints. All plans are then submitted to the prospective owner of the estate for his final selection, and when the choice has been made the MVD takes charge.

One morning the Construction Division of the MVD calls the winning architect into its offices on Furkasova Street, in Moscow. In other cases the summons to the MVD may mean the end of a career. But this time the architect is made the very flattering offer of supervising the construction of the country home for which he has submitted preliminary plans. The remuneration for such an assignment is very good indeed. But the job also has serious drawbacks. Not only does the

architect not know for whom he is building the villa but the MVD also tells him that the entire project is secret and must be carried out in complete isolation from the outside world. In case of security leaks, he will be subject to punishment "outside of court procedure."

The architect knows that the least indiscretion may lead to years in concentration camps. But to turn down the offer is to show oneself disloyal to the Leader and to the régime. Moreover the generous salary and the life of plenty that he will have during the construction period are extremely alluring.

The plans for a personal villa are always detailed and complex. They involve not only the buildings themselves, the fountains, artificial gardens, tennis courts, swimming pools, and hothouses, but also the interior decoration, the bathrooms, shower rooms, electric kitchens, refrigeration, and the furnishings, the ornaments, books, rugs, china, and silver. The architect is responsible for turning over the estate to its owner in perfect condition for occupation.

Once the work begins, the architect and his assistants (who are not permitted to see the over-all blueprint and layout of the estate) must work at the Construction Division of the MVD, where they are kept under close surveillance.

When all the details have been worked out and approved by the future occupant, the chief architect and his closest assistants are sent off to the building site. Here the MVD assigns to them a residence especially requisitioned or built for the purpose; henceforth they may have anything they ask for. Their food comes from the choice supplies of the MVD. "Fresh caviar you can have by the spoonful; the only thing we don't have is birds' milk," the chief MVD agent told one architect who was building such a villa.

The architect receives clothing of the best quality. Portable moving-picture equipment is put at his disposal, and he may ask to see any film he desires. He is supplied with any books he wants. To relieve his boredom the MVD volunteers to supply women in any number, according to taste: "Any kind, any size," as the MVD chief tells him. "You are free to write letters"—but of course the correspondence is censored. On the



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other hand, he is not allowed to see any outsiders and is always under direct control of the secret police.

The most anxious moment arrives when the villa is ready to be turned over to the owner. First a "technical" check is arranged. A special team of expert engineers is brought in to scrutinize everything in detail; they do as thorough a job as they know how, for they too will be held responsible for any shortcomings that may be detected in the future. The inspection is so conscientious as to be preposterous; every plank is checked to see if a bomb has been planted. This thoroughness makes sense when one bears in mind that not only the architects and workers but the supervising MVD men as well are all personally responsible for any "misunderstanding." When the chief architect in charge of Villa Nadezhda learned at the last moment that the buildings were destined for Stalin himself, he became panicky; entering the bathroom and discovering by accident that the "mixer" in the shower was defective and only hot water came from the pipes, he started to shake like a leaf. What if Stalin or someone of his company had tried out the gadget . . . !

Last of all the future occupant checks up in person. All his whims must be satisfied. When the late Mikhail Kalinin, the peasant-president, inspected his new home near Sochi he was displeased with the quality of the window curtains. Feeling them, he declared, "For a president you could really have procured better curtains!"

## THE BLUE EXPRESS

Over a thousand officials in Russia have private railway coaches, or at least they did before the war; today the number has probably risen to include some of the new military aristocracy as well. Several thousand families enjoy the right to travel in the crack train known as the Blue Express.<sup>1</sup>

Private coaches are supplied to all members of the Politburo, all members of the government of the USSR (there are over fifty ministers), most members of the highest party and

<sup>1</sup> The following account of the Blue Express is given mainly as told by its former chief, Vladimir Tregubov.

government organs, certain secretaries of regional party committees, commanders of military districts, chiefs of railways, and many other party bureaucrats.

In the 1920's the Soviet leaders still travelled quite simply. Stalin and the members of the Politburo had their own coaches; all lesser leaders travelled in compartments of ordinary Pullmans. Then it was decided that a special train must be built for government use. This was named the Luxe Blue Express. It was to run throughout the summer season between two groups of resorts, Kislovodsk and Sochi, and to make occasional trips to Moscow. It made its first trip on May 1, 1933, and was in service every year from the beginning of May to the end of November. It was retired each autumn for thorough overhauling during the winter. Ordinary coaches in the USSR are repaired and overhauled only every six years. The entire equipment of every Blue Express coach was replaced annually, so that each reconditioning cost more than 500,000 roubles. The train was operated at an annual loss of 1,000,000 roubles.

The train's personnel, like the old tsarist guard, was selected from the tallest and handsomest men. Special precautions were taken in selecting the chief of the train. Only after endless interviews by party committees and the GPU was he finally approved for the job.

Tregubov to begin with had to see to the building of the train. He selected ten of the best coaches from various lines and began to rebuild them. The first requisite was that no noise of the wheels be heard inside the coaches, and that they move smoothly. To achieve this a thick coat of lead was poured over the floor of each coach; this was covered with a layer of felt, a layer of cork, another layer of felt, a wooden flooring, and yet another layer of felt. Over this was laid a covering of linoleum, and on top of everything a soft rug. The resulting floor was like a feather bed. The rugs laid in the lounge coach cost 5,000 roubles apiece in a special restricted shop in Moscow. They could not have been bought in the open market for 50,000. In testing a coach a glass brim-full of water was put on a table in one of the compartments; not a



drop must spill on the table during the entire trial run.

On the outside the coaches were painted deep azure and the roofs sky blue. The paint was covered with a coat of lacquer and polished until not a rough spot or a scratch could be found. After each trip the sides and roof of every coach were rubbed down with soft sponges. All metal parts inside the coaches were made either of nickel or of stainless steel. The windows were of plate glass. The passages between coaches were so constructed that the passenger would not be aware he was leaving one coach and entering another.

The coaches were Pullmans, 23 metres long. Ordinary Pullmans have 64 seats or 38 berths. Each coach of the Blue Express accommodated only 16 persons. It consisted of eight compartments (for two persons each), with toilets between every two compartments, and one bathroom. Equipped with every convenience, the compartments outshone the most comfortable trains in Europe.

Tickets for this train were not sold but were distributed to the various government bureaux. There were three categories of tickets, the difference between them consisting chiefly in the type of restaurant service to which their holders were entitled. Passengers of the first category could demand anything they wanted in the dining car and in any quantity. Those of the second and third were served specified kinds of food and drink free but must pay for any additional service. The dining car provided a wide selection of exquisite delicacies, a great variety of fruits, and the choicest drinks.

Before every trip the conductor passed from compartment to compartment, spraying eau de cologne and putting flowers on the tables. During the journey he brought around fruit, sweets, and the best cigarettes. The most extravagant whims of the generals, marshals, people's commissars, secretaries of regional party committees were to be satisfied.

Every member of the Politburo had his own private coach which was coupled to the end of the Blue Express. In external appearance these coaches did not differ from the other passenger coaches in the train. This was for the protection of the leaders and to maintain secrecy. But the equipment and

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furnishings inside were of fabulous luxury, even compared to the express itself. The plan for the interior decoration of such a coach had to be personally approved by the man for whose use it was intended. Expense was no consideration; the government bank supplied unlimited sums for this purpose.

Stalin's coach has two bedrooms, a sitting room, an office, another office for his secretary, a compartment for the persons accompanying him, a bathroom, and a kitchen. The walls and all the furniture are of mahogany. The coaches of other leaders are built along the same lines, but the panelling and the furniture in each are of different styles and materials. Kaganovich's coach, for instance, is done in Karelian birch, while Molotov's is exactly like Stalin's.

The lesser Soviet bureaucrats tried to emulate the top leaders and also spared no government money to furnish their private coaches. In 1936, for instance, a number of awards were issued to railway men, and the head of the Northern Caucasus Railway, Maievsky, was awarded coach No. 1 from the train that had once belonged to the tsar. Tregubov was sent to Moscow to take this over. The tsar's train stood on a siding in the October Railway station. Everything in it had been preserved exactly as it had been in tsarist days, even to the china and the bed linen. When it was brought to Vladikavkaz, Maievsky was obviously disappointed and ordered a thorough overhauling and refinishing. All the panelling and even the floor were ripped off. The changes cost several hundred thousand roubles. The coach was worked over for three months, with dazzling results. And Maievsky was the head of only one of the twenty-four railways in the Soviet Union. The cost to the country and the people of the private coaches, villas, resorts, sanatoria, sanctuaries, special stores, restaurants, exclusive motion picture houses, concerts, and banquets of all these thousands of big and small Soviet bureaucrats taxes the imagination.

Whenever Stalin, Molotov, Zhdanov, Kaganovich, or any other big leader travelled to a resort, his coach was coupled to the end of the express. Before every such trip the train chief was summoned to the NKVD office in charge of the



railway, informed of the identity of the eminent passenger, made to sign a pledge of secrecy, and ordered to take all necessary precautionary measures.

Throughout the entire trip the train chief and the head of the railway's NKVD division had to ride in the locomotive. They were personally responsible for the safe arrival of the train at its destination. Behind the "leader's" coach there was always another coach, exactly like it in appearance, as a "blind," carrying a detail of NKVD men, and others were distributed through all the carriages, entrances, and platforms; two or three of them sat in the dining car.

The representative of the First Section of the Moscow NKVD rode in the same coach as the leader. No one else on the train except its chief was to know about the special passenger. However, the very nature of the precautions usually led them to make a good guess.

Before the train passed a station all incoming and outgoing switches were locked and each was guarded by the switchman and an NKVD agent assigned to the station. Troops and agents from the railway's NKVD section were stationed as guards in all the tunnels and along the entire length of the tracks. The train was always stopped so that Stalin's coach or that of any other Politburo member was exactly opposite that station's NKVD "operative point."

As soon as the train pulled in the NKVD guards jumped out of the carriages and scattered over the platform, keeping everyone away from the leader's coach. No one was allowed to pass, though the other passengers might be people's commissars, marshals, prominent party officials, and their wives. Ordinary Soviet citizens were not even permitted near the station when the train was due.

When the train reached its destination two or three guards were the first to emerge from the special coach, then came Stalin and the persons who accompanied him, followed by two or three more guards. This whole group quickly traversed the station NKVD office and entered motor cars waiting outside. At the Sochi station these cars were usually Buicks, all exactly alike, so that it was impossible to tell which one

carried Stalin. At that moment no one was allowed in the square adjoining the station. Stalin walked by the train personnel rapidly, looking at no one and greeting no one. A moment later he disappeared behind the door of the NKVD.

Stalin usually comes to Sochi in late August or early September and stays for a month—on rare occasions a month and a half; however, his visits are more protracted now than they were before the war. Besides an NKVD representative, he is accompanied only by his private secretary; there are never any superfluous people in his coach.

Heaven forbid any delays on the trip with Stalin aboard! One such instance happened on a night in 1936. The train was preceded by another, consisting of tank wagons loaded with gasoline. At one station the official on duty allowed the tank train to go ahead, thinking it would reach the next station by the time the express arrived. Had he known that Stalin was aboard he would naturally never have done this. Unfortunately there was a steep grade in the next stretch of track and the locomotive of the tank train laboured and then stopped. When Stalin's train approached the station, the gate was closed and it too had to halt. All the guards jumped out of the carriages and surrounded the train. The head of the railway NKVD section came running up, shouting: "Why is the gate closed?" The delay lasted only three minutes, and then the train proceeded as usual. But the station official on duty was immediately arrested. Even the station master, who was at home in bed at the time and knew nothing of what had happened, was arrested. Through all the excitement Stalin slept peacefully in his coach.

The ordinary passengers of the train—the people's commissars, secretaries of regional party committees and other "little leaders" and their wives—travelled to resorts not for their health but for amusement. And to them "amusement" meant drinking bouts and love affairs. In no other resorts do "amusements" assume the proportions attained in Sochi and Kislovodsk. People get sick to death of the dull everyday life in Moscow, where even the highest officials work like pack



horses and are in constant fear for their lives. At the resorts, as Tregubov tells it, they all go wild. In Soviet jargon this is called "getting a taste of life." The drunken orgies and amorous scandals became the subject of a whole body of legends among the train personnel.

In this respect social life on the train itself broke all records. The trip between Kislovodsk and Sochi took almost twenty-four hours. The luxurious surroundings, the profusion of drinks and rich food, the sense of freedom from responsibility for any action despite the careful watch maintained by the NKVD, all combined to arouse an irresistible hunger for adventure or amorous intrigue; many began to look for it as soon as they entered the train.

Marshal Budenny was the most straightforward of the lot. He would go directly to the dining car, order food and vodka, invite some officers to join him, and spend the rest of the trip consuming enormous quantities of alcohol but never getting so drunk he could not walk. His closest rival in consumption was Stalin's old friend and compatriot, Avel Yenukidze, shot in December 1937 in the great purge.

Whenever the wives of party officials found no appropriate acquaintances, they turned their attention to the conductors and the other personnel of the train, who were all young men. Often, on arrival in Sochi, some of the men went off duty, changed, washed, and departed in cars to the various villas.

The NKVD kept two girl agents permanently in the train. It was their duty to strike up an acquaintance with the passengers, engage them in conversation in the dining cars, and generally keep their ears open. They were good looking, always well dressed, knew how to behave in society and were always accessible to the important passengers. They were subordinate to the head of the NKVD.

On the whole [says Tregubov] toadying to authority reached incredible proportions on the Blue Express. When some big shot was aboard (not to mention the leaders) people simply could not find a choice enough place to offer him. I remember the trip, in the autumn of 1936, on which the sister of the all-powerful Yagoda was travelling with us

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to Sochi. She was pathetically ugly, but all the officials, big and little, outdid each other in showering her with compliments and flowers. She was constantly surrounded by a crowd of sycophants. At the station she was met by the chief of the regional NKVD, the secretary of the regional party committee, and the director of the NKVD sanatorium. A month later she came back quite disregarded, with only the porters to carry her luggage. Yagoda had been deposed.

The job of chief of the Blue Express is a very profitable one: Tregubov was paid as much as the chief engineers of the largest factories; twice a year he received new uniforms, and there were numerous perquisites. There was such an abundance of goods around the train that no one kept any account of them. One could bring home from these trips whole cases of caviar, tinned goods, wines, and cigarettes. Tregubov lived like a Soviet dignitary—yet in ever-present fear of arrest. He was always being called for questioning by the NKVD and various party commissions. And his fears were well founded. He was finally arrested and sentenced to be shot on the charge that he had allegedly plotted to assassinate Kaganovich but for some reason had not gone through with it. The sentence was commuted, and later during the war Tregubov had the chance to leave Russia.

## THE SECOND GENERATION

Although the preceding account relates mainly to the situation before the war, it deals with trends and tendencies that are typical of the post-war era, too; moreover, these seeds abundantly sown before 1941 and then apparently destroyed in the great chaos had taken root and put out strong tendrils when Soviet normalcy began to return.

Everything in these reports is characteristic and important. Typical is the buoyant attitude of the social *élite* to life itself, the pursuit by men and women of somewhat primitive pleasures, the contrast between their hard work at the office and their frenzied search for amusement outside of it. Typical also is the lack of a sense of proportion and modesty, the desire for



immediate luxury ("better than the tsar had"), and the conviction that the state should provide it. Highly typical is the contrast between the loyal member of the *élite*, permitted and encouraged to enjoy life, and the disloyal, stripped in a second of rank and title, of his Blue Express ticket, of his villa, of his eminent physicians—and then of liberty itself.

Before World War II the first generation of the revolution predominated among the social *élite*; since the war the second generation is rapidly taking over. The difference between the two is just as wide and significant as that between similar generations in American history. In Russia the first generation, which had been submerged before the revolution, which remembered Lenin and had fought in the civil war, was often rough, uneducated; a class of parvenus, it sensed the uncertainty of its recent power and privileges. It believed that the iron fist of the political police was essential to secure its high position.

A generation that grows up in a revolution wears out fast, and the war has accelerated the date of its replacement. It is remarkable how many young faces are seen today in prominent positions in the Soviet state machinery; unlike their predecessors, they are children of that state.

The advent to influence and power of the second generation is one of the most important developments of the post-war era. Members of this generation have enjoyed a systematic, often a good education; their habits are less primitive, their manners more polished. It was the ambition of their fathers, as soon as they had climbed up the ladder, to prepare for the children a better way of life than they had known themselves and never to let them sink back into the glorified but miserable crowd of "workers and peasants." The boys and girls went to colleges and universities, where they learned more than Leninism-Stalinism. They read the great books of world literature, visited picture galleries and museums; they studied in laboratories. In the 'twenties and 'thirties a profound gulf still separated members of the old intelligentsia from the new; the first were much superior to the second in knowledge, in

outlook, in behaviour, though less reliable from a political standpoint. Now the gulf between the children of the two groups is narrowing, and before very long it will disappear entirely. An amalgam of old and new elements is in the making.

To the second generation of the social *élite* a Soviet nation seems no sensational achievement. It is like water to drink, like the sun and the moon—something taken for granted, that cannot arouse strong emotions or sincere pride. The majority of them are loyal to the Soviet régime; but their loyalty is a different kind from their fathers'. It is a blind, unthinking loyalty, of course. Their grandfathers, too, were loyal to the existing régime: they sang hymns to the tsar and fought in his armies. Then, almost overnight, they turned enemies of the government; they mounted barricades and pointed their guns at the old police. This rapid succession of loyalty and disloyalty, characteristic of people in autocratic and dictatorial systems, makes it nearly impossible to evaluate the strength of a government.

There is a world of difference between devotion and loyalty. The first generation was surcharged with devotion, the second has just loyalty. So long as everything goes well as the machine works, the wheels turn, the people obey, and the star of the Leader shines bright, questions are not asked and loyalty is enough to keep things running smoothly. But crises are inevitable, perhaps imminent.

Political loyalty, like personal friendship, is tested by adversity. As soon as reverses in world affairs strip Soviet leadership of its aura of infallibility the spurious unanimity will cease, even among the higher-ups. What had been accepted as inevitable before—secret police, arrests, forced labour, rearmament, fifth columns—will be hotly discussed and the régime's policies questioned. It is inevitable that divergence of views should follow political and economic failures; and the dissensions will not be confined to the lower ranks of the "common man." A split in the apparent political unity may occur first in the upper strata.

As the generations succeed each other the reliability of the



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top social groups is put to the test. True, the greater part of them belong to the Communist party and are under oaths of discipline and obedience. However, the Communist party itself is assuming a new guise today.

## Chapter X

# THE COMMUNIST PARTY AFTER THE WAR

**O**N THE eve of the war, in 1939, the Communist party of the Soviet Union had a membership of nearly 2,500,000, and before the German attack in 1941 a total of 3,700,000. Today it has about 7,000,000 members. Some 75 per cent are new recruits consisting of comparatively young men and women. During the same decade the Communist Youth League has increased its membership from 4,000,000 to 10,000,000; while the number of its units (formerly called "cells") has grown from 201,000 to 450,000.<sup>1</sup>

In marked contrast to the fluid state of the party rank and file, the leadership has stabilized itself during the past twelve years. During this long and eventful period only one member of the Politburo, Nikolai Voznesensky, was eliminated. Voznesensky had been one of the lesser figures and was never identified with any ideological or political tendency. Once removed, he sank into oblivion.

The other members of the Politburo have proved an efficient team; Stalin selected them with care over the years and they have fulfilled his expectations. None has ever—even for a short time—belonged to any non-Stalinist faction within the party or to any other political party. All owe their rise to Stalin, and their political fortunes depend upon his favour. Their average age is fifty-eight, placing the Soviet régime in one of the most advanced age brackets of any government in the world.

Both consciously and unconsciously the Soviet leaders imitate Stalin in manner, in speech, and even in dress. Nor does the similarity end with externals. Like the dictator

<sup>1</sup> *Partiynaiia Zhizn*, November, 1947; *Pravda*, March 30, 1949.



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himself, none possesses an outstanding intellect or personality. The Politburo is utterly bare of original thinkers, brilliant ideologists, and able writers; the last striking personality was Andrei Zhdanov, who died in 1948. Stalin cannot tolerate, in his inner councils, a man with the intellectual capacity to outshine him, attract attention, and inspire popular admiration. Intellectual mediocrities one and all, his chief lieutenants are men of action, hard workers, excellent organizers and administrators, and merciless taskmasters. The world has had an opportunity to take a closer look at one of them, Viacheslav Molotov. Many of Molotov's traits—poverty of ideas, obstinacy in political dealings, ruthlessness, tirelessness—are typical of the Soviet Union's contemporary leadership. Despite their lack of ideological subtlety, or rather because of this lack, these men, taken together or as individuals, are formidable adversaries indeed.

### THE POLITBURO

Three members of the Politburo have died in recent years: Mikhail Kalinin, who was president of the USSR; Andrei Zhdanov, and Alexander Shcherbakov. Previously selected successors have risen to take their places. In the meantime new men have ascended, or are being groomed for the ascent, to the highest councils. These are M. Shkiriato, of the Commission of Party Control, an old confidant of Stalin's; P. Pospelov, the editor of *Pravda*; P. Ponomarenko, who was recently elevated from his previous post as the party's administrator of Bielorussia; G. Popov, and M. Suslov. The next reshuffle of personalities will be carried out by the so-called Plenum of the Central Committee (which is supposedly the supreme body of the party between congresses and has about seventy members) or it will occur at the next party congress.

To all intents and purposes these five men are already part of the government; together with the twelve members of the Politburo and the "candidates," they wield all power in the Soviet Union. Their rank and actual influence however vary greatly. The activities of most members of the Politburo are

confined to their own special fields, and only a small group chosen by Stalin represents the real policy makers. The existence of this inner directorate was publicly disclosed during the war with the formation of a State Defence Committee consisting of Stalin, Molotov, Beria, Malenkov, and Voroshilov. Actually it existed before the war and continues to exist today; the members of this all-powerful, though unofficial body have private offices in the Kremlin adjoining Stalin's study. At the moment of writing Lavrentii Beria, Georgii Malenkov, and Viacheslav Molotov are Stalin's closest advisers, comprising a sort of supergovernment.

The history of every "shadow government" abounds in personal clashes which assume political forms and political differences which invade the realm of personal relations. These feuds take on particular bitterness in a small group of men like the Politburo, each member of which considers himself best fitted to be the heir apparent and alone worthy of donning the old dictator's mantle. The West, confused and helpless, looks forward to Stalin's death as its salvation; but the high functionaries around Stalin await his end with even greater eagerness. Each of these dynamic, ambitious men unquestionably has carefully prepared plans for the day when the "beloved Leader" vanishes from the scene.

Little is known of the internal feuds among the supreme Soviet leaders. The most recent case was Malenkov's struggle against several of his most influential colleagues, which developed into a battle of opposing cliques. Malenkov's most formidable antagonist, Zhdanov, died in the summer of 1948, in the midst of this secret war. His other chief opponent, Molotov, was demoted a few months later when the Berlin blockade misfired. As a result, Malenkov now has the upper hand.

Sensational as they may sound, the significance of these feuds, intrigues, and conflicts should not be exaggerated. There is no "Molotov policy" or "Malenkov policy" in the Soviet Union, nor was there ever a "Zhdanov policy." Stalin's policy is the only existing one. It is absurd to speak of Stalin as a "prisoner of the Politburo," and it is just as absurd to believe



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that organized factions exist on this highest level to oppose his course of action. He tolerates no opposition, and his power is unlimited.

Often the Politburo is called upon merely to approve and execute what has already been decided upon by the Leader. When new problems arise, differences of opinion do occur within the Politburo; and Stalin, who is a good listener, allows his colleagues to express their views. But as soon as the problem seems clear to him he speaks—and his view prevails. In this system of government all members of the highest political body are only advisers to the Leader: their expert opinion is considered interesting but never decisive; no voting takes place. To a degree these methods prevailed under Lenin; under Stalin they became universal.<sup>1</sup> Stalin dictates his decision to the secretary, and subordinate agencies then issue appropriate instructions to other institutions and to the press. At times, though not often, the decisions of the Politburo are not entered in the minutes. Then the record reads "Decision: oral"; as for example, "Agenda: forthcoming judicial proceedings against X, Y, and Z. Decision: oral." In such cases the decision is arrived at with the recording secretary absent; and in an instance like the above the "verbal decision" contains the actual sentence to be rendered against the defendants on the basis of "party discipline."

Stalin's special position is indicated by an agency he heads himself—the Special Sector of the Central Committee of the Communist party, which comprises over four hundred employees carefully selected for their loyalty. This body is under Stalin's personal command and serves as his personal governmental apparatus. The Special Sector is broken down into

<sup>1</sup> Other political bodies in Moscow imitate the Politburo. Here, for instance, is a description by a former member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern of how the highest body of the International, the so-called Secretariat, works:

"If one is present at the meeting of the secretariat and utters an opinion divergent from that of Dimitrov [Georgii Dimitrov, the president] and Manuisky [Dmitrii Manuisky, of the Russian Communist party] he will be listened to. But the decision proposed by the two last-named will be adopted without discussion. There is no voting, only a summary by Dimitrov or Manuisky." (Delgado, *J'ai perdu la foi à Moscou*, p. 115.)

divisions and departments, which deal with foreign affairs, industry, agriculture, foreign trade, military affairs, security matters, etc. Included among them is a Security Section, Stalin's personal MVD, which is under the dictator's direct orders rather than those of the otherwise omnipotent Lavrentii Beria who heads the MGB and MVD, the main Soviet internal police and security forces.

Beria's Division I (also known as the Leader's Security Division) is responsible for guarding the members of the Politburo while they are in the capital, as well as on journeys, at rallies, and so forth. Also under its jurisdiction is the outer Kremlin guard, which keeps a check on persons entering and leaving and issues passes to visitors. The individual buildings within the Kremlin walls, too, are subject to Division I. The only exceptions are Stalin's personal quarters and offices; to guard these not even his closest friend, Beria, can be trusted. This inner sanctum of the Kremlin is watched over by the police of the Special Sector, which maintains a battalion of armed troops for the purpose. This bodyguard of the Supreme Leader constitutes the aristocracy of the secret police, since Stalin's life may well depend upon its loyalty and efficiency. This special *élite* corps even has control over Beria's Kremlin guards.

When Stalin has a decision to make or wishes to obtain information, he turns first to the appropriate section of the Special Sector. The sector's employes all carry an identification card which confers extraordinary privileges, such as the right to enter the office of any agency without a special pass and to interrogate any official up to and including ministers of the government (only Politburo members are exempt from this questioning); those subjected to it are required to furnish any information desired. The identification card is a piece of black cardboard with a gold stripe across it. It is this gold stripe that distinguishes it from the black credentials of the regular MVD. No identification card in use in the Soviet Union today gives its bearer greater authority than this gold stripe across the pass of the Special Sector employee.

The sector imposes the strictest discipline. Its employees are



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not only pledged to absolute secrecy regarding their work but in addition must observe great discretion in relations with their colleagues. They are expected to refrain from asking superfluous questions; undue curiosity arouses suspicion. Many a Special Sector official was arrested as an "enemy of the people" during the great purges of 1936-38.

Part of the Special Sector is located in the Kremlin, next to Stalin's study; the rest of its employees work in the massive building of the Central Committee, outside the Kremlin walls. The information board at the entrance to the Central Committee building lists every division and its room numbers—except those of the Special Sector. In addition to the regular pass or membership card required for entering the building, a special permit is necessary for admission to the office of the Special Sector.

### THE 7,000,000-MEMBER PARTY

Moscow is in every sense of the word the capital of communism. Of the 3,000,000 men and women employed there at the present time, comprising practically all of the city's adult population, 407,000 (or 13 per cent of the adult population) are members of the Communist party,<sup>1</sup> and 480,000 (or 16 per cent) are members of the Communist Youth League. In Moscow province, however, with a population of about 9,000,000, there are only 195,000 Communists, a mere 2 per cent of the population.<sup>2</sup>

Leningrad, which suffered great losses in its population of 3,000,000 during the war, has only 200,000 party members.<sup>3</sup> The data for some of the other national republics are as follows:<sup>4</sup>

The Ukraine, with a population of approximately 40,000,000, has a Communist membership of 684,000. With an increase of only 31 per cent since 1940, it amounts to less than 2 per cent of the population.

<sup>1</sup> Latest data available are for 1949.

<sup>2</sup> *Bolshevik*, February 28, 1949.

<sup>3</sup> *Pravda*, May 1, 1950.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, January 26 and 30, February 12, 16, 17, and 27, 1949.

## THE NEW SOVIET EMPIRE

Bielorussia, with 10,000,000 inhabitants, has 110,000 Communists—about 1.1 per cent.

The Kazakh Republic has 229,000 party members out of a population of more than 6,000,000—about 4 per cent.

Georgia has 166,000 Communists out of a population of 3,500,000—almost 5 per cent.

Kirghiz, with a population of 1,500,000, has 46,000 Communists, or 3 per cent.

Lithuania has only 24,000 Communist party members in a population of 3,000,000, a percentage of 0.8.

In Latvia Communist membership amounted to 31,200, of whom only 50 per cent, or 1.5 per cent of the population, were Latvians.<sup>1</sup>

In the Soviet Union as a whole party membership represents 3.7 per cent of the population.

The discrepancies among the various union republics do not indicate any difference in the popular attitude toward communism; the time when this was true has long since passed in Russia. Rather they indicate the numerical strength of the officialdom in the given areas. In such newly incorporated provinces as Lithuania, Western Ukraine, and Western Bielorussia the party has not yet succeeded in bringing the local organizations up to the general national level.

For obvious reasons the party has long since ceased publication of its complete membership statistics, which were of great interest. Hence, it is impossible to estimate accurately the social status, nationality, and age of the members. What is apparent from scattered and incomplete information in the press is that the bulk of present party membership joined up during and after the war, and that not only the pre-revolutionary Old Bolsheviks but the politically experienced Communists of the 1920's as well are dwindling in number. With every passing month these veterans give ground before the advance of the new crop of Communists. The majority is already, or will very shortly be, made up of men and women

<sup>1</sup> *Sotsialisticheski Vestnik* (1950), No. 7.



who were still young when the war broke out and were rewarded for some gallant exploit or eloquent speech by admission to the ranks of the otherwise highly selective party.

The first generation of Bolsheviks fought against tsarism and capitalism and was inspired by the ideal of the social revolution. Party recruits during the first decade of Soviet rule had to choose among Trotsky, Stalin, and Bukharin; the dream of building socialism in Russia was what fired their zeal. The latest recruits fought against the Nazi army; their initial political education dealt with foreign aggression, "German beasts," the Soviet Fatherland, and Stalin as a national rather than as a revolutionary leader. In other words, the first political impressions of these newcomers to the party contained little of communism. And the impressions of youth leave marks on the mind that remain for life.

Numerical predominance does not mean control, particularly in an organization like the Communist party of the Soviet Union. Real power has never passed from the hands of the Leader and his small group of lieutenants. When a new tendency appears which deviates from the prescribed Communist path, Stalin either suppresses it or brings it under his control. In the latter case he legalizes it and integrates it into his work, remodelling it according to his own concepts. This great ability to manoeuvre has been the basis of Stalin's success for almost thirty years.

The millions of inexperienced young men and women, essentially non-Communists, could easily have been barred from the party or eliminated after the war by a purge, either bloody or peaceful. Instead the party took another tack. From the time when the party leadership acquired a sense of security and no longer feared an electoral or revolutionary overturn, it began to view the party membership as a possible instrument of policy rather than as a controlling body. Why, then, not admit thousands of capable but politically apathetic citizens to the party?

The goal now is to absorb everyone of prominence in the USSR into the various Communist organizations. A man or woman who excels in some particular regard serves as an

example to others and thus represents a potential leader. Therefore every successful bee-keeper, agronomist, film actor, marksman, or stargazer must be a party member. If he has achieved distinction, pressure is brought to bear on him and he generally joins in the end. Usually the privileges accorded to party members are enough to overcome most doubts. The party is intended to embrace all leading strata of the nation; this *élite* is directed by the Leader; the *élite*, in turn, leads the "broad masses." To a considerable degree the party was able to achieve this objective during the war.

According to Stalin's view a socialist society constitutes a labouring mass whose work is directed by its superiors, i.e., by the Communist party. Whatever the claims of propaganda, a society on the road to communism must pass through a stage of unremitting toil and even of great poverty. In order to triumph in the struggle, particularly in the wars against the West, hard work is necessary. Discussions, arguments, and dissension are undesirable, since they distract the people from their work. Progress is synonymous with economic expansion. As Stalin has said: "Chatter less and work harder, and you will surely succeed."<sup>1</sup>

There was another reason why the party kept the millions of newcomers in its ranks. As the dust of war settled and the outlines of gigantic new tasks began to emerge from the chaos, new contingents of loyal government employees were urgently needed. The army, for example, was being maintained at two or three times its usual peacetime strength; as the skeleton of the huge army of a future war, it had to have a million Communists distributed in strategic locations ready for the arrival of the fateful day. Civil administration and economic exploitation of occupied areas required a multitude of disciplined party members. Local Communists in the newly acquired Soviet territories were few and unreliable; whole armies of party members had to be moved in and settled in the new

<sup>1</sup> Speech of February 19, 1933. The philosophy that the Soviet citizen lives to produce is an officially accepted one. The Communists of the cotton-growing republic of Uzbek expressed this simple belief when they loyally wrote to Stalin in January, 1950: "The Uzbek people consider it their *main* and state-wide task to increase the production of cotton." *Pravda*, January 17, 1950.



areas to handle administrative and organizational tasks, make speeches, and publish newspapers. The MGB-MVD, with its special troops and immense new tasks abroad, needed hundreds of thousands of Communists. Inside Russia the fact that Communist units were spread thinly among the peasantry while large areas had no cells at all had always been a source of anxiety to the régime. Now, with the soldiers returning home, there was an opportunity to tighten the party network on the land.

Therefore, it would have been unwise simply to discard the millions of new party members. The party is a highly disciplined organization, composed of men of unquestioned obedience who have been rewarded for their supreme loyalty. The time is past when the concept of a party implied the right of members to discuss and help decide policies; it would never occur to the young party recruit of today that he might take part in running the party. Party congresses have lost all significance; the last congress was held twelve years ago and the question is no longer raised as to whether this violates the party rule that congresses shall be held every three years. The absence of any such check on government policies is regarded as perfectly natural now.

While keeping the green young recruits in its ranks, the party decided to subject them to an intensive process of communization. A huge programme for indoctrinating these presumably unsullied minds with Stalinism was worked out by the Central Committee and transmitted to the local party organizations for execution. This project constitutes, to this day, one of the party's principal fields of activity in the post-war era. In large part it has been successful. It has, however, failed in certain significant respects.

A number of special schools and universities have been created or greatly enlarged since the war. There are, today, an Academy for Social Sciences, which is officially run by the Central Committee of the Communist party; an Advanced Party School, which is also controlled by the Central Committee; and a large number of regional and local schools under the various party committees. In 1946-47 the party machine

had at its disposal 112,000 "propagandists"; by 1949 their number had risen to 250,000, with 80,000 more in training. Some 170,000 party members in Leningrad, or about 85 per cent of the membership there, have been reported by the chief of the Propaganda Department to be studying Marxism-Leninism in schools and study groups or individually;<sup>1</sup> 15,000 Communists were attending lectures regularly; 7,000 "consultants" were actively assisting comrades who were conducting their studies at home or in libraries.

In 1949-50, in the Ukraine, there were 9,984 "political schools," 14,860 groups studying the biographies of Lenin and Stalin, 23,396 groups studying Stalin's *History of the Communist Party*, and 978 "night party schools" in existence. In the large cities of the Ukraine there were 19 "night universities" devoted to the study of Marxism-Leninism; over 6,000 special schools with more than 40,000 lecturers were operating in 1948, and fully 86,000 lectures were held. This educational network embraced 96 per cent of the party membership.<sup>2</sup> In the Azerbaijan Republic, with a population of only 3,200,000, party organizations arranged 16,000 lectures. In the as yet incompletely absorbed Baltic republics these indoctrination activities have proceeded on a grand scale. In little Lithuania, for example, 2,915 men and women were studying in Communist night universities in 1949.

A great wealth of data of this type appears regularly in the Soviet press; it conveys an impression of a gigantic effort of ideological assimilation. Nothing comparable is to be found in the annals of past history—either in the pre-war Soviet Union or in Hitler's Germany, where the education of a Nazi *élite* was carried out on a vast scale.

The aims of this educational programme have been twofold: first, to improve understanding of the Stalinist brand of communism and instil a deeper sense of loyalty to the party leadership; second, to train efficient, intelligent officials who are conscious of the greatness of their tasks, especially in the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, April 11, 1950.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, November 14, 1949, and *Bolshevik* (1949), No. 3.



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economic field. Political "consciousness" is considered the key to increased productivity; the training of good Communists means economic progress. Education is thus expected to produce greater loyalty and better work.

No overwhelming success has been achieved, however, in imbuing the young recruits with a fervent belief in communism and with hatred for the Western world, particularly the United States. The objective was, as the authoritative *Bolshevik* frankly stated:

To contrast the flourishing economy and culture of the Soviet Union and the people's democracies with the decline in the economy and culture of the capitalist countries; to unmask passionately and indignantly the predatory plans of the Anglo-American warmongers after the war, to increase the vigilance of Soviet citizens and educate them to be proud of the great Socialist Fatherland.<sup>1</sup>

It has proved difficult—indeed, impossible—to attain this goal. The more appeals that have been issued—and there have been hundreds—the more shortcomings and deficiencies have been discovered needing correction.

Party members have shown little genuine interest in this campaign of indoctrination. Obedient and industrious, they have still regarded it as an onerous burden for a professional or working man to bear. The party could enforce compliance with its orders but it could not enforce enthusiasm. *Pravda* often complained about "poor attendance" at party schools. As for the business of "individual studying": "Some comrades who have registered as conducting individual study in the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism," *Pravda* reported, "actually do poor work and fail to meet the necessary requirements."<sup>2</sup>

Moreover, adult students in schools and lecture courses have often been dissatisfied with the level of teaching, feeling that party committees "have not paid sufficient attention to the content of the lectures from a theoretical and ideological point of view." The best qualified and most competent men

<sup>1</sup> *Bolshevik* (1949), No. 17.

<sup>2</sup> *Pravda*, April 11, 1950.

try to evade lecturing and teaching duties, finding it as much a burden as their students do.<sup>1</sup>

Although complaints of this kind recur constantly, they cannot deflect the régime from its indoctrination project. The result is the emergence of millions of representatives of a new type of Communist party member. He is relatively young, energetic, and ambitious, better educated than the average Soviet citizen, and obedient to the authorities. But he is largely indifferent to the major tenets of Communist philosophy and activity. The fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism are to him what prayers often were to his father: something to be mechanically repeated without giving any thought to their meaning.

Least of all do these Communists accept the anti-Western campaign now in vogue in Russia. The feeling of national backwardness is widespread in Russia today just as it has been for a century. In fact, it was accentuated during the war when millions of Russians, including the majority of the new party members, saw "the West" with their own eyes—saw the peasants' living standards, the workers' quarters, the comparatively good sanitation—in a word, the "culture" of the West. The term culture has acquired a new connotation in Russia since the revolution: it now means good manners, politeness, cleanliness. There are Parks for Culture and Rest in Moscow and in other cities. Spitting on the floor indicates lack of culture; a window curtain is a sign of culture. Culture in this sense is always associated with the West in the popular mind; the West is always involved in any discussion of culture in Russia, even if only by implication.

The Soviet edicts and decrees against "kowtowing to the West" are familiar to the average Western newspaper reader. What is not so generally known is that the remarkable ingenuity and relentlessness with which the authorities have conducted the drive have produced only meagre results. The campaign is infinitely more violent than that in Germany was on the eve of the war; it needs to be, because it has encountered chiefly apathy in the population. For over four years anti-Western articles, speeches, and resolutions have flooded the

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, January 24, 1950.



country; people have been dismissed from jobs or penalized for showing a favourable attitude toward Western science and art; top-ranking Soviet authors have been compelled to write anti-Western plays and novels; theatres have been ordered to give priority to anti-Western productions; even the potato bug has been put to work against America. . . .

The real state of mind of the average young Communist and, in general, of the Russian "intelligentsia" can be gauged from one form of public opinion poll which is conducted with greater freedom than the elections to the Supreme Soviet; i.e., theatre attendance. With certain exceptions, the Soviet citizen is under no compulsion in his theatre-going habits and can select his dramatic fare according to his personal tastes, political and otherwise. The theatre has always meant more in Russia than in the West; it has been a major factor in "culture" and part of the intellectual life of the educated class. The Soviet theatre-going public comprises all thinking elements in the nation, and young Communist party members are prominent in it, especially in Moscow and other large cities.

In August 1946 the Central Committee of the Communist Party published a resolution which essentially confirmed the unfavourable state of affairs in the theatres and the preference of the theatre-going public for Western art. It enumerated the most important Soviet theatres and their current plays:

Among the twenty plays on the stage of the Moscow Art Theatre only three deal with current Soviet themes [problems], in the Malii Theatre likewise three out of twenty, in the Moscow Soviet Theatre two out of nine, in the Vakhtangov Theatre two out of ten, in the Kamernii three out of eleven, in the Leningrad Pushkin Theatre two out of nine, in the Kiev Drama Theatre three out of eleven, in the Kharkov Shevchenko Theatre two out of eleven, and in the Drama Theatre in Sverdlovsk five out of seventeen.

In March 1948 the Soviet government decided to eliminate subsidies to theatres. Theatre directors, hitherto little concerned with the box office, now had to cover their expenses from receipts. They suddenly found it necessary to take the tastes of their audience into consideration. Georgii Denike

has made a significant study of Soviet theatre programmes<sup>1</sup> in which he divides the plays into three groups: Soviet, Russian pre-revolutionary, and foreign. Obviously directors are urged to give priority to the politically reliable and "progressive" first group; they are permitted to show plays in the second category from time to time; and they are discouraged against producing the works of Charles Dickens or Victor Hugo, although there is no absolute ban. The results have been remarkable: theatres have registered great successes with such products of Western decadence as Shaw's *Pygmalion*, Oscar Wilde's *The Ideal Husband*, Hugo's *Ruy Blas*, and Dickens' *Dombey and Son*. The last-named comedy has been a bigger hit than any Stalin Prize-winning Soviet play.

Among Russian works audiences clearly prefer Tolstoy, Gogol, and Alexander Griboedov to such Soviet literary celebrities as Konstantin Simonov and Anatolii Safronov. Highly publicized anti-American plays like *The Voice of America* have failed badly. *The Russian Question*, a leading anti-American production, is rarely shown. *Unforgettable 1919*, a prize winner which depicts Stalin as the saviour of Leningrad, closed after the first three weeks.

This theatre audience verdict is important because it is freely given. Denike—writing, it may be noted, abroad—sums it up as follows:—

The further removed the subject of the play is from Soviet reality and from the stereotypes of Soviet propaganda, the greater its power of attraction for the Soviet spectator . . . The choice which the theatre-going public makes reflects a strong yearning for those themes which are most completely suppressed in official Soviet life—æsthetics and humanitarianism, as well as those plays which give free rein to the author's talent and permit virile, full-blooded characters and not dummies to move on the stage. The Soviet spectator is able to distinguish between Tolstoy, Chekhov, Ostrovsky, and Dickens on the one hand and Simonov, Safronov, and Mikhailov on the other. The first group is more meaningful to him.

<sup>1</sup> *Narodnaya Pravda* (Paris, 1950), No. 7.



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### THE EX-COMMUNIST

The peculiar composition of the Russian Communist party, with its divergence between the militant, aggressive, 100-per cent Stalinism of the leaders and the relatively apathetic, indifferent party masses, will assume vast significance in any future political crisis.

During the three decades of Soviet rule party and state have been shaken by many conflicts. All of these, however, fell into one of two categories: attacks by non-Communist forces on the Soviet régime and internal struggles between different Communist factions. The first type, of which the civil war was the most prominent example, gradually disappeared. The government liquidated all opposition leaders; without leadership, popular movements and rebellions remained sporadic and were suppressed before they attained national scope. The second type—Communists versus Communists—originated in temporary deviations on secondary matters (Trotsky, Miasnikov, Shlapnikov) which grew in number, extent, and importance until they reached their peak in the late 1930's and early 'forties.

Thirty years of strict party rule, during which all non-Communist groups have been destroyed and no sizable underground movement has developed, have resulted in a situation in which differences of opinion and interests necessarily emerge and develop within the party itself. Everything, even anti-Communist movements, must parade under the banner of communism.

With the Populists and other peasants' parties liquidated, the peasant opposition to collective farming found expression in the so-called "rightist Communist opposition," which espoused an orthodox-Communist ideology but emphasized private enterprise on the land. The suppression of the independent trade unions under Menshevik leadership caused the labour opposition to find new leaders among staunch Communists, notably Mikhail Tomsky of the Politburo, who committed suicide in 1936. During the war a widespread anti-Stalinist movement (discussed on p.68 of this book)

developed among Russian prisoners of war in Germany. Heading it was a group of convinced Communists, including General Andrei Vlasov, Vasilii Malyshev, Miliutin Zykov, and others, who, in a series of statements and programmes issued in 1942-44, envisaged a Russia "without capitalists." Probably a majority of the leaders in the Vlasov movement belonged to the Communist party.

Should a dissident faction or the army one day seize power in Russia, its leaders will come from the Communist party and, in the very beginning, may even consider themselves true Marxists. In this case even the gravediggers of communism will be party members singing Leninist songs as they enter it.

The ex-Communist is a major factor in the struggle against communism and, as such, merits close attention. With each passing year the rôle of the "ex" in literature and politics increases and he becomes an ever more familiar figure.

The list of prominent former Communists is a long one. In America there are Max Eastman, former editor of *The Masses*; Jay Lovestone, whose expulsion from the Comintern created a sensation and who now guides the foreign policy decisions of the American Federation of Labour; Ben Gitlow, Communist vice-presidential candidate in 1924; Louis Budenz, a one-time member of the party's Central Committee; Bertram Wolfe, once a permanent resident with the Comintern and author of several books on Russian communism; Whittaker Chambers, who once worked in the Communist underground and later became an editor of *Time*; Charles Zimmerman, Joseph Freeman, Will Herberg. A complete list would read like an outdated Communist *Who's Who*.

To these, moreover, should be added the "non-party members"—sincere sympathizers who, like the famous newspaper correspondents William Henry Chamberlain, Eugene Lyons, and Louis Fischer, eventually became disillusioned and turned their backs on Soviet communism.

Among the French "ex's" are three former secretaries of the Comintern, Boris Souvarine, Pierre Monatte, and Ferdinand Loriot; later defections were those of Alfred Rosmer,



## THE COMMUNIST PARTY AFTER THE WAR

Amedé Dunois, Charles Rappoport, Paul Louis, Louis Frossard, Robert Louzon, Pierre Pascal, Maurice Dommangeat, Lucien Laurat, Louis Sellier, and I. Mesnil. The roster of brilliant intellectuals who once sympathized with communism only to suffer a revulsion includes the late Anatole France, André Gide, André Breton, Panait Istrati, Albert Mathiez, and André Malraux (France, Mathiez, and Breton actually belonged to the party for a time).

The anti-Stalinist heresy spread swiftly among German Communists. Most of the German dissidents, however, died in the war, in prison, or as refugees in the Soviet Union. Prominent among those who survived are Ernst Reuter, Mayor of West Berlin; Theodor Plievier, the novelist; Margarete Buber-Neumann, author of *Als Gefangene bei Stalin und Hitler*, one of the most important books of our time; and Ruth Fischer, top-ranking leader of German communism in the 'twenties. Then, too, there is the former Hungarian, Arthur Koestler, a figure of international stature; and, in England, men like John Strachey and others.

The contrast between the ex-Communist and any other political figure who changes his convictions is striking. Republicans turn into Democrats, and vice versa, but such transformations are rarely attended by great bitterness or by an upheaval in the social and private lives of those involved. Editors and senators, disillusioned or weary, step quietly out of public life almost as though they were giving up a casual hobby.

For those who have been bound to the Communist chariot, however, severing the ties is not so simple a matter. It is often accompanied by a personal crisis—by despondency and hysterical emotionalism—and constitutes a sharp line of demarcation between past and present in the individual's life. After the break the ex-Communist does not revert to his usual workaday routine. He cannot rest. He becomes a violent enemy of the party.

His decision to join the party had been the result of moral, political, and social impulses, uninfluenced—at least in the non-Communist West—by any expectation of personal gain.

## THE NEW SOVIET EMPIRE

In most cases he did not hold a well-paid position in the party and hence was not corrupted by a high income. The sort of career he might have pursued as an able member of another political party was scarcely open to him as a Communist. Relentless struggle, revolutionary activity, and possibly service to a foreign power were his lot.

The former Communist is one long imbued with the spirit of sacrifice. As a party member he contributed his special skills and all his spare time to the cause. Attendance at meetings, study groups, and schools at which he imbibed the pseudo science of Stalinism was compulsory; reading the party press was a duty.

After a time he became a leader and teacher. He found that participation in Communist activities involved constant mental and moral strain. For the morality of the Communist party is that of the battlefield: all means are fair, deceit and lying are permissible, and concealment of the truth is essential. Unlike military combat, however, the struggle goes on for years and decades. Party strategy becomes daily routine, and the lie becomes chronic. What is tolerable in the temporary stress of the battlefield becomes unbearable as a state of mind. The official denial that terrorism and slavery exist in Russia and the portrayal of that country, with its appalling labour conditions, as a workers' paradise have particularly taxed the conscience of many a Communist.

When the break comes, the tension, fanaticism and hatred, social consciousness, and urge to find a better way of life do not merely evaporate. They continue to work like an engine in reverse. The violent "pro" becomes a violent "anti." Fire becomes ice, and plus becomes minus—but not zero. The former Communist cannot banish Russia and communism from his mind; indifference is out of the question.

Among these ex-Communists there are many who possess a realistic and expert grasp of world affairs—particularly of Russian affairs, which, after all, encompass the majority of major international problems today. Indeed, the Russian revolution and its consequences over the last three decades have raised a multitude of unsolved questions, have posed



painful issues, and stirred pangs of social conscience. If Russia has been unable to solve them, then so much the worse for Soviet Russia. If Moscow professes to know all the answers, again so much the worse for the Soviet land. But the issues still confront us.

The emotional and ideological disintegration of Western as well as of Russian communism has acquired critical importance today. By the mid-century communism has won such a following and has penetrated so deep into the brains and hearts of many that a simple defeat of the trend from without becomes more and more unlikely. Its defeat may be preceded instead by internal crisis, the defection of important personalities and whole groups, and the denial of the orthodox-Stalinist brand by its former followers. This process, discussed above, has started but is still in its infancy; what we shall soon witness of it will certainly attain far greater proportions.

The same applies to an even greater degree to Russia. A simple defeat of the Communist party and its government by Russian non-Communist forces has proved impossible so far; the first five post-war years have not basically altered this situation. If the situation changes, for instance during an international crisis, it will start with a bitter fight within the alleged "monolith," the Communist party of the Soviet Union.

## Chapter XI

# HIS MAJESTY BLAT

**T**HE MARVEL of Soviet national planning runs like clockwork. The economy of the vast Soviet Union, from Finland's wooded borders to the mounds of Manchuria, works like a giant piece of machinery operated by push buttons. Every weekday at 8 a.m. the multitude of little wheels, levers, and pulleys begins to turn, run, drive, rotate, ship, produce, and harvest, and at 5 or 6 p.m., when the myriad movements planned and projected and calculated in advance are completed, the people of Soviet Russia have created goods and services worth billions of roubles, which are then ready to be distributed among the 200,000,000 people. The word "PLAN" should indeed be spelt in capital letters.

But behind this impressive façade, unsung and unreported, hidden by a conspiracy of millions, there is another world of free trade, free prices, the typical "anarchy of the market place," ruled by self-interest and motives of profit, full of illicit business on a vast scale. Like evil beside good, ugliness next to beauty, vice beside virtue, economic chaos rules side by side with the majesty of Planning. Plan and chaos complement and correct each other. Pure capitalism provides the crutches for communism. And this giant network of unlicensed and unplanned business Russian slang calls "blat."

What is startling is the extent of this surreptitious economy. It is as vast as Russia itself. Its existence is well known to the authorities, who tolerate it as a matter of expediency.

Blat is not a post-war innovation; on the contrary, it has existed since the beginning of the Soviet system. But the government's attitude has been full of vacillations and contradictions.



## HIS MAJESTY BLAT

At times the black market and systematic bribery were severely suppressed, the books providing the death penalty for such crimes; and in fact a considerable number of culprits, some guilty on a very small scale, had to pay with their lives for illicit trade and illicit "gift." Then a safety valve would be opened—such as the NEP in the 'twenties—and for a while free trade was not only tolerated but even encouraged; a good many government officials, lured by the prospect of legitimate money making, worked hand in hand with the NEP-men. But again a turn to the left occurred, with its anti-capitalist overtones and the reintroduction of stringent punishment for private economic enterprise. Finally, since the middle 'thirties, a system has taken shape in which a rigid state economy is combined with a limited amount of free trade for kolkhoz peasants; actually, both these elements have been supplemented by growing, expanding, flourishing blat—the sphere of illicit economic activity. The first two elements of the Soviet economic system have been widely publicized and are well known at home and abroad. But the third component, blat, has been so effectively kept from the general public that its significance is rarely appreciated in spite of the fact that it plays a tremendous rôle in the everyday life of a Soviet citizen.

Here are a few typical facts and accounts selected from numbers of personal narratives.

Yakov Karas, a young employee in the Department of Internal Trade of Bielorussia, was sent from Grodno to Bialystok to receive a large shipment of blankets for his agency. When he showed his credentials at the textile shop the manager told him, "You can have the blankets if you leave 35 per cent of them at my disposal. Of course, you'll sign a receipt for all of them."

Young Karas, who told me his story in full detail, was an inexperienced and unsophisticated fellow. He burst out with a heated tirade about theft and deceit and banditry. But the manager remained cool: "All right, it's up to you. Do as you please." Burning with indignation, Yakov went to see a couple of old friends in the same city. "Think of it!" he

shouted. "The nights are cold; the hospitals are short of blankets; and this gangster tries to make me turn over part of our blankets to him. I'll denounce him to the MVD, and he will get years behind barbed wire . . ."

"Don't do it," his friends told him. "He would deny everything, and you have no witnesses to prove it. It would take weeks to get the case started. You'd better accept his offer and take the rest."

Depressed, Karas returned to the shop. He asked the manager only one question: "How do I explain it to our accountant?" "Don't worry," he was told, "the accountant will know how to take care of it." It sounded mysterious, but Karas gathered up his blankets and headed home. When he entered his home office he had a lump in his throat. But the accountant did not seem in the least surprised to hear his story. He was neither angry nor disappointed. "Okay," he remarked. "I'll take 10 per cent and you can deliver the rest to the storeroom." Karas, already responsible for the loss of a third of the lot, could neither protest nor argue. He silently complied—only to find that the storeroom superintendent too wanted a few blankets for his own purposes.

Of the four persons involved in the deal Karas was the greenhorn. The others were carrying on the business by which they have for years been supplying the market with all sorts of goods and themselves with a little extra income. The lion's share of what is thus acquired is sold on the *rynok* at prices far above the fixed government price.

A *rynok* is not an ordinary market such as you find it in every county seat all over the world. In the larger towns almost anything can be located on the *rynok* stalls, while the shelves of government shops are often bare. Except on rare occasions the police do not interfere in the market, although they know all about the practices.

It would be a mistake to assume that there were only three men involved in the blanket transaction just described. The two accountants to whom Yakov had to turn over a share are both heads of large offices; what they do becomes known to



at least a few of their colleagues and subordinates. Discretion on everybody's part is needed to avoid denunciation, and the accountants therefore readily admit their colleagues into their circle: they become accomplices, and the earnings of each member of such a business ring are not so great as one might surmise.

The same applies to every other link in this peculiar free-trading chain. That it covers a sizable part of Soviet society is manifest. Who then is part of it? Are these members of the criminal underworld who still harbour a desire for self-enrichment and material comfort? Do these people have any ethics to guide them?

When I knew him some thirty years ago, Marc Portnoi was a student at Petrograd university. A good violinist, a quiet dreamer, wearing heavy glasses to correct his nearsightedness, he wrote poetry and studied law without any clear notion of what he was going to do with his education. He lived in a world of his own between heaven and earth; he got married in an absent-minded way and now, as I learn, has two daughters. To say that Marc was honest would be an understatement: he belonged to that group of human beings who by their very nature cannot be dishonest even if they try.

I lost track of Marc a few years after the revolution. I never ran across his name in Russian newspapers; he was neither a writer nor an orator and he had no political ambitions. Recently I learned by chance that Portnoi is living in a large provincial town where he occupies the important position of deputy director of a large mill producing underwear. His present salary, I was told, is not bad but does not suffice to supply him and his family with all the things they need, without resorting to operations on the free market.

In Russia the demand for most kinds of linen, cloth, and wearing apparel far exceeds the supply. From other towns and provinces orders pour in and buyers arrive at Marc's plant to obtain as much material as they can as rapidly as

possible. The director and his aides can arrange the sales, cautiously navigating between the more or less attractive offers, so as to give preference to some at the expense of the others.

The man who brought me the news about Marc the dreamer was Sasha Gronsky, who was in contact with him for over six years. Sasha is a Pole who lived near Lwow with his wife until 1940, when the new Soviet occupation authorities began to recruit young men and women to go to Russia as doctors, engineers, or workers. The response from the Poles was not overwhelming, but Gronsky had heard about all the great things the Soviet system was supposed to have accomplished, and he accepted the offer. Soon he was working as a tailor in a Soviet artel. An artel is a collective of workers, recognized by the state and included in its five-year plans. It is supposed to obtain all its raw material from the state and sell its products at a fixed price, so that its members do not earn much more than the average industrial worker.

At first Sasha fared badly. His share of "dividends" in the artel amounted to a few hundred roubles a month; unlike other workers he had no vegetable garden of his own and no relatives among the farmers in the vicinity. And Sasha hated crooked deals. A son of a religious man, brought up in an old-style code of morals, he refused to do anything that was not above board and feared to get into trouble with the law. As a result there was never enough food on Sasha's table and often the family had nothing but plain bread to eat.

One day a neighbour came to see Sasha and asked him to make him a suit—privately, that is. He brought the cloth with him—one yard more than was needed, as payment for Sasha's work. Strictly speaking, this was against the law: both private work outside the artel and payment in kind were forbidden. But the temptation was too great and Sasha succumbed for the first time. He ran to the market, sold the yard of cloth, bought corn and butter, and for once his family ate their fill. In the Bible it took an apple to open Adam's eyes. Sasha began to see the world around him differently after this first experience with cloth and corn.



The artel was producing men's shirts, both civilian and military, but was idle half the time because there was not enough material. Why was it, Sasha began to wonder, that the other artel was always busy and its members seemed to be prospering? When a number of workers left for the army, Sasha was elected department head and began to look further into this matter. Raw material was supposed to come from the great textile mill where, it turned out, my old friend Marc Portnoi was running the show. Sasha went to see the head of the distribution department, who is in charge of shipments. At their first meeting they discussed the weather and the war. The next time they spoke of fabrics and prices and had a few drinks. Finally Sasha put the question: why was it that the other artel was getting enough cloth while Sasha's was idle half the time? "Why, if you want to pay a rouble a metre more than the fixed price, you can have 10,000 metres a month," he was told.

The fixed price was 85 kopeks a metre; on the black market a metre sold for from 30 to 100 roubles. Sasha agreed to pay illegally this extra 10,000 roubles a month. Like all other such expenses, the excess price of course could not be entered in the books nor could any receipt be given for it.

Now, with the supply arranged, Sasha's artel began to function. Yet in some way or another the extra expenses had to be made up; that is, some of the shirts had to be diverted to the free market. There were any number of ways of disposing of the shirts; the best was to sell them to the small state-owned stands, which paid high prices for finished goods and sold a fraction of them at fixed prices to the customers waiting in long queues in the street and the rest, as they say in Russia, "to the left."

Soon Sasha engaged a special sales agent to handle the illicit rynok transactions. Alert, quick, and clever, this agent never got into serious trouble with the authorities. To give him a cover occupation, Gronskey made him "night watchman" at the shop; a watchman does not arouse suspicion if he strolls around during the day. The unaccounted earnings of Sasha's artel were regularly divided and fairly distributed

among the "shareholders." About thirty people in and around the shop knew about the arrangements yet not one ever denounced anybody.

Meanwhile Sasha and the managers of the textile mill—including the nearsighted Marc Portnoi—had become friends. Soon Sasha learned that the thousands of roubles which he and others paid the distribution department actually were divided among a number of people at the top, and that each of the officials and employees had some source of additional income. Most of them were Communists—some by conviction, others of necessity. They were regularly screened by their party cells and by the MGB, the political police. On the whole they were reasonable men, good fathers and husbands, decent citizens. Perpetual lawbreakers, they are the rule and not the exception in Soviet society.

If we turn to the living standards of Russia's industrial workers, the picture remains just about the same. The average monthly wages of a worker in Russia are not enough to buy a pair of shoes, and to buy a simple dress a girl must sacrifice at least six weeks' pay. But there is a corrective that sometimes helps to swell the meagre private budget: again the chaotic reverse side of the five-year plans, the world of blat.

Martin Sharov, a cripple since the battles in Galicia in 1916, has had trouble making a living. The wages at the soap plant where he was employed never were adequate. As he grew old and his wife died, the director appointed him guard at the factory gate. Sharov had to check the workers coming and going. From time to time he was ordered to search their pockets for soap. Not every day; the very fear of being caught with "government property," the official formula stated, "will deter the criminal elements from stealing."

But misery is stronger than official formulas. Heads of families and housewives working at the plant cannot understand why they should not use a few cakes of soap, a mere trifle in the rich and powerful Soviet Union, to relieve a little of their poverty at home. Martin Sharov, the guard, was just



as poor as the rest of them, and when ordered to check for soap he went through their pockets with experienced hands, counting: "Three cakes . . . two cakes . . . four cakes . . ." and quietly letting them pass.

What was the point of counting the cakes of soap if he did not bother to report the thefts? The next day the workers were to bring Martin half of their haul, and he had to keep books in his mind. They were kind to old Martin because he was nice to them. They never tried to deceive him.

So the system works—has worked, and keeps working—at hundreds of factory gates throughout Russia.

At the textile mills in Y—most of the workers are women. The mills produce fabrics for dresses—consumer goods valued more highly than soap—and the workers are guarded closely here during work and when they go home. And yet girls do take chances and now and then slip a few yards of material under their dresses before passing through the gates. Then they sell it on the market or, more often, to tailors and dress-makers.

Because of the great shortage of wearing material this "fight against thieves of Soviet property" is vigorously conducted. To frighten and browbeat the workers one or two women are sometimes arrested at the gate; they are watched and picked in advance, and the guards, who are given their names, arrest them the moment they try to pass. This is how Tatiana Karpova, a young mother and weaver at the mill, was caught.

The office, ready for the impending arrest, had made the necessary preparations: the Communist cell, the director, and his aides were on hand when the culprit was brought in. Immediately a general workers' meeting was called: those who had not yet left were ordered into the great hall and the arriving night shift joined them. But this was not one of the frequent ordinary factory meetings: this was a show trial. The long table on the high platform was covered with red cloth; a woman judge was rushed in from the city court; two women workers acted as lay members of this factory court.

Tatiana, in tears, pleaded guilty. What else could she do?

The director himself, the source of all power and authority in this provincial world, rose from his seat to deliver the indictment. His speech, prepared and memorized, was terrifying. He lashed out against "dirty disorganizers of our Soviet economy," against "thieves of the people's property" and "elements helping our enemies abroad." More than once loud applause interrupted his oration. "Do you know, Tatiana Karpova," he shouted in indignation, "that you have deprived two Soviet boys of clothing by stealing this piece of cloth? or a Soviet soldier just about to leave a hospital? or a *kolkhoznik* still clad in the remnants of his pre-war clothes? . . . You are a bandit, a foreign agent, a traitor. Comrade judges, I demand the highest penalty for Tatiana Karpova—death!"

The audience was stunned and terrified—for just one moment. Then everyone glanced furtively around, with the same question in mind, "Am I being watched?" and joined furiously in the general applause. Everyone in the audience knew perfectly well why Tatiana had tried to take home the cloth; everyone had done the same sort of thing; there was no moral indignation against Tatiana. Her only fault was to have been caught where others had got by unnoticed. The chiefs and bosses were sitting at the large head table: directors' assistants, chief engineers, technicians, secretaries of the Communist party unit. They listened attentively to the director's speech and when he was through they did not look at each other.

The frantic shouting and clapping ended, and the judge asked Tatiana if she had anything to say. Still sobbing, she only shook her head. After brief deliberation the judge announced the sentence: one year of compulsory labour, to be served at her place of employment. Everybody sighed, obviously relieved. Tatiana too smiled happily. She would have to live in a prisoners' colony ("corrective labour colony") on the outskirts of town; every morning she would be escorted to work along with thirty-odd other women, and after work she would be escorted back. And her child would have no mother for that year. Yet a death sentence had been asked for, and the danger had passed.



Only the director was bitter. The mild sentence was no surprise to him; it had been prearranged. With his aides he returned to his office, dropped into his armchair, and shook his head:

"What next, comrades? If things go like this, before long all five thousand of my workers will be a bunch of prisoners marching in and out under guard!" He distinctly said "my workers." This was partly a sign of affection, partly a vestige of old-style communism.

Tatiana moved to the "labour colony" the following week.

In some cases a milder form of compulsory labour is applied: the worker is permitted to live at home but must turn over a share of his wages—usually 25 per cent—to the government for a period of six months. In such cases the procedure is the same as in sentences compelling a worker to surrender a share of his wages in support of his divorced wife. In Soviet parlance, therefore, workers sentenced to compulsory labour at reduced wages are said to be "paying alimony to the state."

The authorities are well aware of blat transactions. The Soviet police are the best-informed on this globe, and denunciations are as frequent in Russia as coughing and sneezing. Yet except in political affairs the police are not as severe and unrelenting as one might think.

If a citizen's loyalty to the Soviet state, its chief, or institutions is questioned there can be no mercy or pity. No prayers or bribes will help. If a political suspect must be apprehended, no pull and no friends will avail him. If arrests or deportations are ordered, they will be carried out unflinchingly. A Soviet police officer knows only too well how closely he himself is watched and observed, and it is by the utmost severity and perseverance that he saves his own job and life.

Yet there is a vast range of non-political offences—such things as theft, bribery, black marketing, and even murder—which subordinate MVD men are freer to deal with than with allegations of Trotskyism, deviationism, pro-Americanism. After all, the MVD man is the last in a long line of Russian policemen, with their tradition of severity mitigated

by graft. He is exceedingly poor himself—and he wants to live. He understands blat operations; he feels for the poor devils who manage to make a couple of roubles in this manner; and he has a good deal of respect for the potent directors and heads of departments who are capable of making his life easier.

He may drop into a store or shop and look around. Promptly the manager will invite him into his office, offer him a chair, and proffer a glass of vodka. The manager will be extremely polite, since both of them know that there have been irregularities in the business.

"Comrade Petrov," the director will inquire kindly, "you have a family?"

"Yes, comrade; a wife and two kids."

"Does your wife happen to need a pair of fine made-to-measure shoes?" the director will suggest.

Petrov's wife is badly in need of shoes, and her loyal husband is happy to hear the offer. But he is suspicious: is he being led into a trap? Is this not a provocation? (How often that word is used in Russia!) He tries to appear indifferent and does not even reply. Instead he scares the wits out of the manager:

"You know, last week I saw a truck leave the shop at night . . . Whom do you actually sell to?"

An hour passes, vodka lubricates the conversation, and mutual interests are found. The MVD man is satisfied that law and order prevail at the shoe store. The following week his wife and children proudly display new shoes of "the kind they wear in Moscow." And everybody is happy.

It might seem that the vast network of blat produces moral depravity and degrades a great people to the level of petty thieves and bribe takers. The inference is unwarranted. The same men who do not hesitate, or by dire necessity are forced, to engage in illicit operations remain honest, human, and friendly people in their private lives. In these Soviet years the national character of the average Russian has changed but little; it includes loyalty to a true friend; if need be, giving



away one's "last shirt"; pure and devoted love between man and woman; and even a great degree of reticence and modesty.

The truth of the matter is that there are two scales of ethics in Russian life today—much as there were in the United States during Prohibition. Side by side there are the popular attitude, of solidarity among people against the state economy and state property, and another set of values—substantially the "old" and "Western" code of morals—which governs relations between man and man, and man and woman. Somehow the two moral systems co-exist and do not clash. A man sells government property for thousands of roubles, week after week violates the criminal code, and thinks nothing of it. To the average Russian today the state is an awful, powerful, and impersonal giant, and the individual is a tiny, miserable man. The citizen has obligations based on law but he has no moral feeling or inner compulsion of duty toward the Leviathan.

Among citizens other norms prevail. "There is a solid though unwritten code of principles that is followed"—a recent operator of an *artel* told me. "If one makes a promise, one must keep one's word. One does not cheat one's neighbour. One does not denounce one's partner in a business transaction . . ."

The state tries hard to break this attitude of the individual. Special laws provide heavy penalties for infringement of the state's property rights; for some time capital punishment was among the possible prices. But these laws have not changed popular *mores* a great deal, and the old practices and attitudes continue to flourish as before.

This attitude toward the state can be understood as a revival of time-honoured Russian *mores*, only on a larger scale. In a delightful short story written sixty years ago Anton Chekhov described the trial of a typical Russian peasant indicted for unscrewing and stealing bolts from the railway tracks. The malefactor admitted taking the bolts: he needed them as sinkers for angling, he told the judge. He could have caused an accident, he was told. "No," the peasant shook his

head, that was impossible. "If I'd gone off with the rail, or put a log across the tracks, well, maybe it would have wrecked the train. But this nut—phooey!"

When in the end the peasant is sent to jail, he is startled:

"How is that, 'to jail'? Your Honour, I have no time, I must get to the fair: Yegor owes me three roubles for lard."

"Shut up. Don't interrupt."

"To jail! If there had been a reason, but this way . . . I'm an honest man, Your Honour. What are you doing this to me for? I don't steal and I haven't been in a fight either . . ."

On the whole the Soviet press does not mention blat affairs, nor does the radio report them; only in exceptional cases is the public told about the unplanned economy. Here in a slightly abbreviated form is a *Pravda* report about a building superintendent who at the same time is a private contractor (the paper characteristically omits all such data as the name of the city and the time when these events took place).<sup>1</sup>

Building is in progress on the factory site: excavators, bricklayers, carpenters, brick-stackers, and lumber piles. Nearby, construction superintendent Kislyakov is strolling about, puffing away as if expecting someone or other. From time to time he goes out of the factory gates and casts a disturbed glance about him: "Are there no 'clients'?" But "clients," the construction superintendent's name for those citizens who are on the lookout for man-power and building materials—are a spontaneous and irregular phenomenon which cannot be counted on: not a day passes by without a band of these seekers near the building site, loitering about.

Kislyakov has just passed through the factory gates when three figures appear simultaneously. But the construction superintendent has already guessed from their grayish attire that they are worthless "clients." And the fact of the matter is that one wants three window frames, another wants a brick wall patched up, and the third wants to have a

<sup>1</sup> *Pravda*, May 11, 1950 (trans. from *Current Digest of the Soviet Press*, Vol. II, No. 19).



director's office plastered and painted. Oh, no, Kislyakov is not interested in such chicken feed. But making a beeline for the construction superintendent is a prosperous-looking citizen clad in a high-quality coat: one look at him and you feel immediately that this fellow will place an order for not less than 1,500 [roubles].

A business chat for fifteen minutes, and the construction superintendent returns to the building site. He summons four carpenters. "That citizen over there is waiting for you," he says to them. "Ten days' work, no more. Get it?"

The carpenters, with unconcealed satisfaction, leave the factory and briskly make for the gates. They know that, as before, the construction superintendent will still include them in the brigade and that they'll get paid just as if they were really participating in the factory construction. They also know that what they get from the "client" will be divided in half: half for them and half for the superintendent.

Once, when Kislyakov sent his workers "to the left"—i.e., took them off the state construction—he failed to respect even the code of thieves: he took out of the carpenters' additional earnings not one-half but five-sixths. The carpenters took offence and raised the roof, and all of the deals of the cunning old fox came to light. The legal authorities became very much interested in this, but the thief slipped through their hands. With the knowledge of the Chief Construction Administration, headed by Comrade Nadezhdin, and supplied with 2,000 roubles for "travelling expenses," the rascal hastily betook himself to a far-off construction site. Try to catch him!

How long has this business been going on? No answer to this is forthcoming either from the accounting division or from senior inspector Comrade Nikitin: they merely made a hasty spot-check (which in accountant's lingo is called "catching a whale on a fishing line") of the whole gigantic field of construction work.

And Comrade Pitsersky, Deputy Minister of the Iron and Steel Industry, has issued order P-176. The order is all-embracing, it pertains to false documents, illegal "registration" of funds and building materials, and to the practice among construction superintendents and brigade com-

manders of not noting the issue dates of pay forms and not even mentioning the last names of the workers who are supposedly participating in the construction.

The order concludes: "Within three days after reading this inspection act, draw the necessary conclusions and punish the offenders severely. Information about individuals issuing and sanctioning fictitious payforms, as a result of which there is an illegal drawing off of capital funds, is to be transmitted to investigating agencies . . . To be complied with not later than February 10, 1950."

But directors of chief administrations and trusts know that that ministry is not very rigid in its controls and in checking on implementation of them. And here it is almost the end of February and the chief administrations and trusts have neither by word nor deed responded to the ministerial order. They do nothing and keep silent. And the ministry does the same. . . .

Only as late as March 31 did Comrade Nadezhdin, full of spiritual satisfaction, sign the delicate order No. 45. Herein he declared that four workers of the trust had been sentenced—two severely and two lightly.

Undoubtedly, construction superintendent Kislyakov, on hearing this, gleefully exclaimed: "Order! Everything's fine. That's the end of that." Well, and what about the ministry? What ministry? Not a peep from it!

This report in that highly official newspaper confirms the features of blat revealed in the individual accounts: the figure of the shrewd *entrepreneur*; the workers doing the job for the "capitalist" with "unconcealed satisfaction"; the inspectors and accountants involved in the transaction; the contractor's dishonesty towards his associates as the only reason why the case was brought to light; the stern order from the minister which remains ineffective; and finally the actual impunity of Kislyakov's associates except for a few unlucky workers.

The resourcefulness of the people seeking additional means of subsistence knows no limits. The most unusual case I know of is that of a sanitation team, or "brigade," as it is called in



the Soviet Union, whose job it was to scavenge a town without a sewer system. Every night they had to visit a number of houses in their district and take the full cart to a dump far out of town. This job is usually regarded as one of the dirtiest in the world; in the old days the founding fathers of communism used to argue that in the happy future, under communism, people would not be driven by poverty to accept such socially useful but disgusting tasks. How surprised they would be today to see the contented faces of the members of the "sanitary brigades" in the numerous provincial cities in Communist Russia which still have no sewer system!

Ivan Solodukha was in charge of such a brigade; he was the only man in his crew who was clever enough to engage in business negotiations. And real business negotiations there are. Every morning owners of private dwellings and janitors of apartment houses hasten to Solodukha's place with the plea to "Come quickly. We can't stand it any longer, we're living in filth." Ivan has several answers. Either "Today we must clean out the MVD building; they have priority, you understand," or "One horse is lame today," or some other excuse. Then the customer knows that it is time to grease Solodukha's palm, and Ivan divides the several hundred roubles among the other "shareholders."

But this is just the beginning. A more profitable source of income is the sale of the brigade's "goods" for fertilizer for suburban gardens. People are willing to pay high prices for dung, and readily compete for it, as the diet of many city dwellers depends on their vegetable plots. The golden opportunity for the six-man team is their transportation service. For their work they are assigned several horses and fodder by the city. Twice a week they use the horses and the cart to do a little business of their own: deliver wood to some obliging citizen, move furniture, or some other remunerative pursuit. In Russia horses are the basis of much private enterprise.

The MVD has a sort of schedule for its anti-black-market drive. Like every other schedule, this plan must be fulfilled.

Every MVD agency and every court throughout Russia must report the monthly number of arrests and convictions for black marketing, embezzlement, and bribery. The ministry compares and analyses these reports. On the basis of long years of experience and of new instructions, a certain figure is deemed to constitute a "normal" rate of arrests and become the "plan" for the next period. In this way there emerges a statistical plan for arrests in various categories of crimes and misdemeanours; every court gets its plan to fulfil. If the projected figures for arrests and sentences are not attained, this is interpreted at the "centre" as a sign not of decreasing criminality but of lax police work. The officers will be reprimanded and their promotion held up. This is why a certain number of people must be detained monthly and daily, regardless of the soundness of the case against them. In the overwhelming majority of cases the victims are helpless, awkward, inexperienced, and poor.

In Voronezh two of the three Belov sisters were employed in a local plant. These girls were apprehended one day on their way to the rynok with a few yards of linen tucked away. Their answers of course proved unsatisfactory, and they were arrested. When the third sister learned of this she hurried to her fiancé, an employee of the local Soviet; the fiancé in turn went to see his old pal, the chief of the local militia. "Vasia," he begged, "please let the girls go. What difference does it make to you?"

"I can't," the police chief told him. "I don't know yet whether the June quota for the anti-speculation drive has been filled. If it hasn't I can't possibly let them go. Wait until midnight: we'll see how we make out."

The girls waited in jail. At midnight the fiancé returned. "You're lucky, boy!" the police chief greeted him. "We've over fulfilled the plan, 112 per cent!" He had had a few glasses of vodka and was talking freely: "Listen, Miron, the younger is a pretty nice-looking girl. Perhaps I ought to raise some conditions before I let them go . . ."

"What kind of talk is this?" Miron exploded. "You're a



married man. And you want the sister of my future wife to . . .” “All right, all right,” the officer mumbled. He signed the order for their release, and they had another vodka “to the successful fulfilment of the plan.”

## Chapter XII

# PRETENCE AND REALITY

**F**OR OVER three decades a seemingly inexorable trend of Soviet evolution has been the constant though gradual expansion of the state's sphere and the contraction of that of the individual in every field of social and private life. What was being witnessed was the growth of the total state. One area after another was removed from the jurisdiction of the individual and added to the realm of the state. This process occurred first in the political field, then in the economic and after that in education and ideology. Regimentation was becoming increasingly extensive and severe. The police state was in the ascendant.

For short periods—a few months at the most—this trend toward the total state was interrupted. In 1921, for example, capital punishment and the dreaded and dreadful Cheka were abolished. In 1934 the GPU ceased to exist. In 1939 the head of the police, Nikolai Yezhov, was liquidated. After each short interval, however, the former process was resumed, almost as if in accordance with a law of history. The omnipotent state took up again its task of striking at the tiny individual islands, disintegrating them and incorporating one after another into itself.

During the war the party's machinery jammed. Alongside the party a new, huge army machine was erected. At times it seemed as if the brilliant uniforms of the military leaders were destined to outshine the old, less spectacular party dress. The kolkhoz system of farming was upset; in areas which had been occupied by the enemy a considerable number of kolkhozes disappeared. In newly annexed provinces only individual farming existed. Soviet periodicals and books referred



sympathetically to the capitalist nations. Marxism-Stalinism, somewhat neglected, was compelled to tolerate the cautious stirring of "alien" ideologies among the Soviet intelligentsia. Religion, readmitted, probed for a means of attaining a significant rôle in the life of the nation.

It is not surprising that many outside observers should have been led to believe what was transpiring was the "evolution" so confidently expected in the post-war years. A great many Russians awaited it too. The implication of the changes was clear. If these trends which were being so spontaneously pushed "from below" were not stopped, a decline of Russian communism would inevitably be the result. Doom might be the more accurate word. And this is why the Soviet rulers had to throttle these developments as soon as was possible.

"Restoration and further development" has been the constant refrain since 1946. Politically translated it means restoration of the pre-war *status quo* and a new "higher and higher" development along the same lines. Applied mainly to economic pursuits, the formula in practice embraced other phases of the activity of the party and state. These included political affairs, the arts and sciences, ideology. Even the old principles of foreign policy were to be applied, although in the context of a new international set-up. In every field the axiom was restoration of the old, the pre-war order. The corollary was: this restoration will lead us eventually into a second phase and then new achievements will be possible which will excel all previous records.

The first to recover was the party. Rapidly, in keeping with the directives, it reassumed its old positions. It grew in numbers, along with its Youth League, by claiming credit for all successes in the war. "The Party and the Government" was again the standard formula, never the other way around.

Then the period of post-war purges was inaugurated. These were many-faceted, all-embracing operations: purges of administrative personnel, purges for political unreliability; purges bloody and bloodless, purges silent and noisy. Their meaning

was always the same; they were the means of restoring the party's undisputed omnipotence. They served also to re-sharpen the practical and theoretical weapons of Marxism-Stalinism. Started soon after the war, the purges have by no means been ended. For five years they have been a substitute for the non-existent political life in the Soviet land.

The army was rapidly dethroned, removed from the spotlight. Some generals were summarily dismissed, others were dispatched to service in distant provinces. Even lauded heroes disappeared from their pedestals. The police system was polished up again. It took on new sparkle and acquired additional functions, in the satellites and in the West.

A law issued in the autumn of 1946 had as its aim the restoration of the kolkhoz system in all its rigid essentials. Individual peasants' plots, if they had grown during the war, were to be reduced to their original microscopic size. A peasant could own one cow, no horses. Two years later the drive for the "collectivization of farming" began in the newly acquired provinces, such as eastern Poland, Bessarabia, the Baltic states.

The personnel of the local administrations also underwent thorough screenings and experienced great and systematic purges, especially in areas the Germans had occupied during the war. In the Ukraine, for example, over 70 per cent of the presidents of local soviets and more than 40 per cent of the party secretaries were purged in 1945-47. Elections to the central and local soviets were held all over the country in that period. The old techniques were resumed in full vigour, of party-controlled one-slate elections, a multitude of political campaigns, and deportation of large numbers to the "labour camps." These were merely habitual governmental traits revitalized after the war.

Successful restoration of the *status quo* does not imply, however, that everything has actually remained unchanged. There has been a series of shrewd stratagems, of clever zig-zags. A process of genuine, if less easily evident, mental evolution is also taking place. New trends are becoming



manifest in almost every field of social life. They have been dealt with in several chapters of this book. Neither genuine evolution, however, nor tactical considerations have led the leadership to abandon, either in theory or in practice, the old system of a complete dictatorship. Nor have the leaders sought to tone down the great offensive and reduce its attendant strains either at home or in foreign affairs.

### THE PURGE OF THE PEOPLE'S INTELLIGENCE

The state of mind of the nation as it became manifest during and after the war has been the party's chief object of suppression. What is this thing against which the party has had to strike?

The primitive level of Soviet propaganda, endlessly disseminated in fiction, on the radio, in films, has always been nauseating. There is ceaseless praise of the wise, blameless, faultless "party activist," of his heroic exploits in war and industry, of his faithful wife or fiancée. On the other hand a traitor, a descendant of the old capitalist classes, is castigated without end; Soviet propagandists delight in details of his exposure and punishment. By contrast of course a happy ending is the inevitable reward for those who are loyal and devoted. No novel or play is permitted to tell a story of the privation, the misery or suffering, the torments of the common man. And of course no word may be uttered impugning a political leader. Literature must serve the Cause. Its duties are to stimulate new activity, to implement Soviet directives unstintingly. The theme of the interminable symphony is always the *Eroica*.

The Russian reader and listener longs, however, to see and hear something else. He is surfeited with the constant perversion of reality, a reality he knows intimately. He wants, like other men, to have things recognized for what they are. In addition, his human wants are much like those of other ordinary mortals in all corners of the world. He keeps his eye peeled for a good plot, for artistic verisimilitude, for characterizations of human beings with both good and evil in them. He is

bored to desperation by the robot types of impeccable Good and consummate Evil. He has lived for long in the Soviet never-never land, and his quest for reality is as strong and persistent as is the search for utopia of many elsewhere in the world. He knows that there is more to life than the Eroica; there is also the Moonlight Sonata. There are drums and trombones but there are also harps and violins.

This desire for "escape" (in other countries it would be called the opposite) is not a new one. The common Russian, long buried in an avalanche of rolling drums, used to escape to the realms of Tolstoy and Pushkin and Turgenev, Chaikovsky and Glinka. He also escaped into the world of foreign literature, if and when it was available (the war accidentally furnished some). At length, after the war, some Soviet authors dared to descend to earth from the Communist skies and instead of devoting themselves to fulfilling their quotas of "social demand" reverted to their traditional rôles as writers. They started to tell, necessarily in a subdued tone, some of the facts of Soviet life.

For this the party cracked down on them. The farther their artistic impulses had carried them from the official party line the more dire, of course, was their fate. The celebrated satirist Mikhail Zoshchenko was banned from publication for several years. All publishing houses, magazines, and newspapers were notified that he was on the state blacklist. Other famous writers were severely and publicly criticized. The party's Central Committee charged the authors and producers of the realistic film, *The Big Life*, with serious crimes. In the film, for example, "wounded red-armists are left on the battlefield"; "The miner's wife shows indifference to them"; "Arriving young girl workers are subordinated to a scoundrel-bureaucrat." The songs in the film, the committee expertly observed, are of a "sad character," and this of course is contrary to the party's brisk, sprightly, up-on-your-toes ideology. The playwright A. Safronov, author of *Beketov's Career*, was accused of having failed to demonstrate the "organizing rôle of the party" in an industrial plant. Alexei Cherkasov was guilty of a similar crime in his novel, *The Day Starts in the East*. The



work is insufferably bad. Why? "Neither the party organization nor Stakhanovites appear in it."

In a special ruling the Central Committee admonished playwrights that many of them "cannot depict the best traits and qualities" of the Soviet citizen. Able and well-known Valentin Katayev, whose novel *For Soviet Power* appeared recently, was reprimanded for failing to depict the Communist secretary of a secret underground group under the German occupation as "a sample of firmness and faith in victory." And not to be forgotten, of course, was the evil of foreign plays: "American and English plays poison the minds of our people with an outlook alien to Soviet society."

*Partynost* became the party's counter-slogan. No exact translation of the word can be given. It means party spirit, loyalty to the party, unquestioning submission to the party's directives. *Partynost*—as against the trends toward non-partisanship; *partynost*—as against the popular army; *partynost*—in art, science, in private life. "Down with objectivism, long live *partynost*!" A crusade was launched against Communist scientists who had not complied with *partynost* 100 per cent. The dean of Communist economists, Eugene Varga, was found culpable and demoted. His crime: in a book written in the pre-Western war era (but published later) he had discovered affirmative traits in the American economic situation. High-ranking Georgii Alexandrov was reprimanded for his *History of Philosophy*; he was guilty of "objectivism" in expounding philosophical concepts other than materialism. "Cosmopolitism" provided incriminating evidence against a great number of Soviet scientists, loyal communists and others. Editorial boards were dismissed, new hands were put at the helm—and these in turn disappeared.

Along with *partynost* another term regained official popularity: purposefulness. Down with "art for art's sake." Down with æstheticism. Down with a science which favours theory over practice. Everyone and everything must be subordinated to the political line of the party's Central Committee. Connoisseur of all fields, the committee dealt with equal expertness with publishing decisions, good and bad music, correct and

incorrect theories of heredity, pure and profane philosophy, and any other issue, no matter how complex, which required its wisdom and authority.

The Greek-Orthodox Church still belongs to the very few fields where "restoration and development" has not entirely succeeded the wartime reforms. Considerations of foreign policy were the chief of the reasons for this course of action, and the war against the Vatican in the satellite countries was not the least of these. The fact is that some churches are open, services are legal, and Soviet citizens can listen to religious sermons. This toleration, however, is counter-balanced by a new "offensive on the ideological front"—specifically by militant materialism in philosophy and by the propagation of a distorted theory of evolution. Hence the enormous significance attributed to biology and philosophy in the post-war ideological crusade.

In all these operations trouble shooter No. 1 until the day of his death was Andrei Zhdanov of the Politburo. He conducted the purge of the novelists, playwrights, literary critics, film producers, script writers. It was Zhdanov who directed the drive against infidel philosophers. Elsewhere other helpers took up the campaign; it struck dissidence, or suspected independence, from the ranks of sociologists, historians, economists. After Zhdanov's death the purge in the field of biology gained momentum. Soon it involved psychologists, physiologists, eminent leaders in medicine. Finally the frenzy caught up with linguists—and this was the only post-war purge in which Stalin publicly took part.

History, economics, sociology, and allied disciplines have continually been the object of purges; definite ideological order was achieved in the early 1930's. The campaign against philosophy, less related to current political affairs, started in the late 1920's. In the early years of the next decade the drive against "Menshevist idealism" was completed and the last aperture for philosophers already working within a realm of conformity was completely closed. In creative writing, including poetry, deviations occurred again and again despite all the efforts of the party; even in this field, however,



"synchronization" was almost complete on the eve of the war.

There remained, however, the great, almost untouched area of natural science. Preoccupied with tasks demanding immediate and urgent attention, workers in this field were permitted more leeway. Thus natural science became a way of escape. Thousands of students and competent professors, opposed to scientific regimentation and the degradation of the theory of "social demand," took refuge in these spheres of human knowledge. In their laboratories, shops, and hospitals it was easier to breathe. The percentage of party members, rather high in the humanities, was, it should be noted, comparatively small in the natural sciences.

But in the post-war years a co-ordinated Communist offensive hit these branches of science. By now these purges have achieved great—and devastating—victories in many fields of theoretical and applied science.

The post-war purges have often been held in settings of great public enterprises. The Academy of Sciences has served as such a setting, as have general meetings of the Union of Writers and special congresses of scientists. The procedure has been uniform. A person holding—for the moment, at least—the full confidence of the party delivers the first report in which the new line is laid down and the deviationists are named and castigated. The accused then confesses his "scientific" and "criminal" blunders. These, he may say, covered years or decades. If in his confession he does not sufficiently humiliate himself, he is accused further of insincerity and must atone for this new crime. In the meantime the ideas expounded in the initial report automatically become law and must be universally accepted and applied throughout the Soviet Union.

In this way, for example, remarkable standing was fabricated for a rather dubious scientist, a man whose fame has spread to the Western world. His name is Trofim Lysenko, a modern alchemist who claims to have changed wheat into rye. His theory has the party's official blessing; it is law in the Soviet Union. Lysenko's views are held by the Soviet

gauleiters in science to further the environmentalist-materialist *Weltanschauung*. Allied to his ascension a campaign has been unleashed to destroy the reputation of Leon Orbelli, the greatest of Russia's living biologists. Orbelli is accused of deviating from the tenets of evolutionary biology. Besides, "he has studied abroad." In the same way the lives and careers of a large number of Russian scientists have been bludgeoned. They have had to pay a high price for the illusion that by building great and expensive laboratories and by creating scientific institutions the government intends to foster science.

The purges so well begun are continuing. They go on in the old fields and are being extended to new ones.

### THE BALANCE SHEET

"Restoration and further development" has proved successful in many fields which, in a superficial view, may seem decisive for the future of the state. These include the police, industrial output, party discipline, and order among the Soviet peoples.

Restoration has served the political system well. Never before did the Soviet state reach the degree of total control that it has today. At the present time it is more totalitarian than any other totalitarian nation has ever been in the history of a world replete with such state structures. If the aim of the totalitarian state is constant readiness for the decisive act the Soviet Union now stands at its pinnacle of preparedness.

In foreign affairs, too, "restoration and further development" has proved a marked success. Restoration to the Soviet Union of her frontiers of 1941 was achieved when the war ended; since then the state has evolved into the next, the "higher" phase. The state, in short, has grown into an empire and the empire is expanding. A new and fearsome record has been set. The imperial structure, with its population of over 800,000,000—32 per cent of the world's total—is *the largest empire in history*. Itself a product of expansionist trends which grew out of an ideology, the expansion in turn generates new



border problems, objectives for new drives, new global aims and tasks.

The formula of restoration and development has also been applied to the Communist International. Actually never dissolved, the Comintern-Cominform has become even more of a Soviet tool than it was before the war—a quite remarkable achievement. The task of the Communist international arm is to approve and sanction an overt policy of subjugation of satellite Communist parties to the rule of Moscow, as well as the economic exploitation of dominated nations by the new imperial régime. Kept alive for many years in preparation for the eventual great offensive, the Cominform is submerged whenever the Kremlin prefers the use of camouflaged drives and front groups, such as the Stockholm “peace campaigns,” to acknowledged Communist drives and groups.

The greater the extent of the power of the imperial régime, the wider its area of control, the greater grows the tension in the non-Soviet world and the less the chances for a stable peace, or for any peace. A stage is being rapidly reached in developments where only a broad retreat from global positions can save Russia and the world from unparalleled catastrophe. The Soviet government, however, has manoeuvred itself into a position of artificial and inflated prestige from which there is no backing down without great losses and without a crisis on the home front. History teaches—and it is a sad lesson—that tensions of such magnitude are seldom resolved by peaceful means.

Restoration and development have also succeeded in their aims for Soviet economy. The pre-war economic system has been re-established and extended to new areas. Industrialization, with special emphasis on war industries, is again the supreme law. The 1940 level of production has been reached and exceeded. The tribute which former enemies and the satellite countries have been made to pay has made it possible to attain again the pre-war standard of living, with its various levels. Workers and other employees are still bound to their jobs and cannot quit or change employers. The kolkhoz

system is being reconstituted, more rigid and centralized since the reform of 1950 than ever before. The state budget with its large military expenditures is firmly re-established, and its main source is again taxation of the consumer. Forced labour is prevalent in many fields of industry, in canal and railway construction, in extraction of strategic and otherwise valuable minerals, in lumbering, and in other fields. The widespread network of blat, with its semi-legal and illegal activity, serves in practice as somewhat of a corrective to the deadening hand of the bureaucracy in the economic sphere.

The social structure of the "socialist nation," the new class society, has been reconstituted in every layer. Psychological barriers to this evolution, blueprint relics from communism's hoary past, have finally been obliterated. The upper strata, in particular, feel safe and secure so long as they remain completely loyal. There is no reason, therefore, why the rich should not get richer.

Communism in the Soviet Union has remained, as it was before the war, the applied form of Stalin's version of Marxism.

This then is the obvious state of Soviet Russia today, the state as seen by the realistic naked eye. But it would be a mistake to accept it at face value.

One inch below the surface the rot at the heart of the Communist state begins. Below the surface also lie the common people who have been the first victims of three decades of tyranny. They are tired, despondent, and mute. Their scepticism has hardened into a way of life; outwardly they are resigned, they perform, as they must, lip service to the messianic teachings of the leaders. They are too intelligent to be deceived but too weary to rebel. They wait, wait for help from elsewhere, or at least the first tokens of help from the "unliberated" parts of the world. They have no distinct programme, no manifesto course of action that can be reduced schematically to points a, b, and c. The major yearning of the people, after several turbulent and oppressive decades, is for relaxation. The acute sense of dignity of the human being has so often been violated that the nation longs for justice and



right. Normalcy has become a prized goal—a life in which the average human being—not a state-recognized hero or superman—can live decently.

There are differences between nationalities, but despite all these differences the average Russian citizen—including no small portion of the Communist mass, perhaps its majority—has much in common with the common man of other civilized nations. He has much in common with the hopes and aspirations of the rest of the world. He is flesh and blood, and his flesh has been beaten and his blood has been spilled. The best service we can perform for the Communists is to accept their myth—spread surreptitiously and cleverly—that the Russian people do not mind what is done to them and with them, that they are “only Russians,” so backward that their backwardness dictates the Communist course of action. Given their conditions of life, and making allowance for the efficacy of Communist indoctrination, they want what we want. And the Communists have not given and cannot give it to them.

On the bank of the Neva in Leningrad stands the beautiful monument of Tsar Peter, the cruel reformer, a great admirer of Western civilization and a leader in a multitude of wars. Created by the famous Falconet, the monument depicts the tsar as a rider who has thrown his horse—Russia—on its haunches just at the edge of a precipice. In every muscle of the animal there is both power and strain. For a time Soviet writers enjoyed comparing Joseph Stalin with Tsar Peter—despite the fact that Stalin is attempting to close Russia's western window, which Peter opened. Stalin, too, threw Russia on its haunches and keeps her in this tense position; he too extracts from the people superhuman effort and countless sacrifices. But the ability to sustain this exertion is now beyond Russia's strength.

Even if obedient, Russia cannot bear a great new strain. Even if armed to the teeth, with the best of weapons, the nation cannot win a new war against a mighty enemy.

And beyond and above, or below and beneath all other

problems of the Soviet régime is its touchstone: *the Russian people*.

In great international conflicts nations have often used a fraternal appeal to an enemy people to alienate them from their government. Usually this appeal has served as part of a propaganda technique, as a stratagem of psychological warfare long before the term was invented, as hypocrisy in the interests of victory. Such an appeal would be very different in regard to the peoples of Stalin's Russia.

The Soviet government itself has attempted—however inadvertently—to instruct us in the enormous potential of such a plan. Is it not significant that it is concealing from its people the true image of the outside world, that it is hiding from the outside world the true image of the life of the Russian people? Has any attempt at suppression, in the long history of Communist suppression, ever been more desperate? But revealing chinks appear in the great Communist wall. The gaps in recent years have not merely been apertures permitting a glance within; they have also been breaches allowing those within to escape to the outside. In the past few years many have escaped with the mandate from their fellow citizens to "tell the West." Others even greeted the hated enemy on Russia's soil. After the war it proved difficult for the government to harness its people with the old straps.

A pro-Russian anti-Communist policy for the West is a concept that holds within itself a great and important programme. It is important politically because it widens the Western alliance by including in it a significant new component; at the same time, however, it makes it obligatory never to neglect the legitimate interests of the new ally, never to fall back into pro-Sovietism, and never to indulge in primitive anti-Russianism. It is also a programme with military value because in the case of a war a seriously intended appeal to the Russian forces can mean all the difference between success and failure. By implication this concept suggests answers to a number of pending problems of prime importance, for example regarding the priority of Europe or the Far East in Western strategic concepts, and how the



A-and H-bombs can be used in a great conflict. Finally, the concept is important because its only alternative is the re-emergence of a recently defeated central European empire as the predominant power in Europe.

We must study deeply and draw the lessons to be learned from Russia's unique position. We must realize that techniques successfully applied by the victors in Germany and Japan cannot win in Russia. On the other hand, we must realize that there is stupendous weakness in the entire Soviet structure.

Russia, it should never be forgotten, unlike the former Axis nations, cannot be conquered or even occupied by an enemy. Western aviation, although able to inflict heavy losses, cannot defeat Russia. And after Napoleon's and Hitler's experiments a foreign military leader will hardly attempt, with any rational hope for success, to push deep into Russia again.

There can be but one sound approach to what is called the Russian question, or the Russian menace, or Soviet aggression: to recognize it for what it is, the thunder of a storm that has long ago rumbled its way to oblivion, a belated heritage of a revolution which has lost all semblance of greatness and almost all its popularity, a convulsive effort of a government to continue an offensive in world and home affairs contrary to the wishes and needs and moods of a long-suffering nation whose major longing is for prolonged and deep rest and recuperation.

Dictators come and go but a nation remains. Abolition of the present political system in Russia can be finally achieved only by means of internal developments; it will constitute a distinct and dramatic chapter in Russia's history. But such a transformation will be possible only as the result of great events on the international scene, events that will destroy the aura of invincibility of Stalin's government, that will hearten the discouraged and dormant opposition and spur it to new activity. Not even by war can the outer world bring about a new régime in Russia but it can do much to accelerate events and create the preconditions.

The people are the touchstone of Stalin's system and of Stalin's policy. Without and against the Russian people

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neither a peace campaign nor war can be won by his opponents. With the Russian people as ally the coming showdown against the most cruel and insufferable tyranny known to the memory of man is certain to end in a historic victory for the cause of liberty and civilization, a cause whose worth has been reaffirmed by three decades of Soviet despotism.



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